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BRIEF HISTORY

OF THE

SHIA ISMAILI IMAMS

BY

MUMTAZ ALI TAJDDIN SADIK ALI

[Karachi, 2009]

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MUHAMMAD, HOLY PROPHET (571-632 A.D.)

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Ismael, the son of Abraham had a son, Kaidar whose progeny spread over the Arabian province of Hijaz. Adnan, to whom the Prophet traced his descent, was also a scion of Ismael in about the fortieth generations. Further down, in the ninth descent from Adnan, there followed Nadar bin Kinana. Another descent in the genealogical scale and then comes in the ninth place, one, Qassi by name. The supreme charge of the Kaba fell into the hands of Qassi (d. 480 A.D.). He collected the scattered tribe, which gave him the title of Qoraish, and from him the charge of the Kaba descended to his eldest son, Abdul Dar, from whom the chief offices were transferred to his brother, Abd Munaf, and after his death, his son Hashim was consigned the charge of *Sicaya* and *Rifada* (the exclusive privilege of supply water and food to the pilgrims). Hashim married a girl from his own family and she gave birth to his son, Asad, who in due course became the maternal grandfather of Ali bin Abu Talib, as Asad's daughter, Fatima bint Asad was Ali's mother. Hashim's second marriage actualized with a girl of Banu Najjar, and she gave birth to a son, called Abdul Muttalib. Hashim died in 510 A.D., who left his dignities to his elder brother, Almutallib, after whom his nephew, Abdul Muttalib, the son of Hashim, succeeded to his paternal offices.

It was also in the time of Abdul Muttalib that the Yamenite king, Abraha invaded Mecca, but was discomfited in his attempt and made a disgraceful retreat. Abdul Muttalib died in the height of his glory and left indelible marks of greatness. Abdullah, the son of Abdul Muttalib, married to Amina bint Wahab. To this noble couple was born Muhammad (peace be upon him), but before he was born his father, leaving the young pregnant wife. On the morning of Monday, April 22, 571 A.D., a grandson was born to Abdul Muttalib, who named him **Muhammad** (the extolled one).

Mecca, about forty miles from the Red Sea embosomed with torrid rocks, where the air was heavy and the children there grew up pale, weak and sickly. All about and around Mecca was desert, whose air was limpid. For this reason, it was a custom of the Arab nobility that the mother did not nurse their children. They would give their infants into the charge of Bedouin women to suckle and nourish them. Abdul Muttalib assigned his grandson into the care of Halima al-Sadiyyah, near Mount Taif. Having nurtured for five years, the wet nurse Halima gave him back to his mother, Amina, who also died after one year. Henceforward, Abdul Muttalib was both mother and father to the orphaned child. But this was not to be for long either. The old man died when the Prophet was eight. The dying Abdul Muttalib consigned the guardianship of the Prophet to his son, Abu Talib, whose fondness for his charge equalled that of Abdul Muttalib. At this early age, the Prophet's integrity had already won household fame in the town. He was commonly known as *al-Amin* (the trustworthy). The epithet does not imply honesty alone, but is all-comprehensive, denoting righteousness in every form.

A high-placed widow, Khadija, who had acquired by her virtue the titles of *Tahira* (the virtuous) and *Saiyyadah-i Qoraish* (the princess of the Qoraish), hearing of the righteousness of the Prophet, entrusted to him the charge of her business. He accepted an office in the service of Khadija and was placed at the head of a caravan and sent to Syria. Before long much profit accrued to her through his honest dealings. The personal attributes and moral grace in Prophet attracted the attention and won the admiration of Khadija. So honestly the Prophet did transact the widow's trade that she caused a proposal of marriage, which met the approval of Abu Talib. Thus was he married, at the age of twenty-five, to a widow, fifteen years older than himself.

Four years after his marriage, the Prophet would frequently take a provision and retire for days into a cave at the top of a cone-shaped mountain, called Hira, some three miles from Mecca. He used to spend night after night in that solitary cave far away from all the worldly turmoil. Here he eagerly pondered and contemplated in long and lonely vigils to search after One and Only God. He prayed ardently, opening his whole heart to his Creator Whom his soul longed to meet. He became so fully absorbed in the ecstasy of his devotions that he would remain for days in the mountain cavern. This went on for a considerable length of time, till at last, in his fortieth year, a great unseen was revealed to him. The light of God was fully reflected in the Prophet. He had reached the stage of self-elevation when duality becomes non-existent and only One remains.

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Khadija was sorely worried at first, but soon regained her composure and comforted him. "Fear not, my noble one", she said, "but rejoice. God will not forsake you in this affair nor expose you to shame. For you are good and kind and truthful. You are hospitable to the passing stranger, you aid and comfort the poor and the lowly, and support the virtuous in righteous deeds." Waraqa bin Naufal was Khadija's cousin, and she took him to her cousin. No sooner did Waraqa hear what inspiration the Prophet had received and how, than he spontaneously exclaimed: "This is the very angel Jibrail that God sent down to Moses." Hence, the foremost to profess faith in the truth of the Prophet's mission was his wife Khadija.

For the first three years, the Prophet kept his missionary activities underground. Neither the rancor of Arab chiefs nor the antagonism of other opponents in Qoraish prevented the secret mission of Islam. To those who did harm him, the Prophet prayed for guidance, for liberation from the yoke of vile paganism. The more they persecuted, the more patience and resolve the Prophet showed in his mission.

The Prophet received a divine command in the fourth year to operate his mission in the public. In compliance, he invited his kinsmen to a feast exclusively arranged for them. Tabari (d. 310/922) in **Tarikh al-Rusul wa'l Muluk** (Leiden, 1879-1901, 2:63) and Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845) in **Kitab at-Tabaqat** (Leiden, 1905, 1:171) write that after the feast was over, the Prophet addressed the participants, "Friends and Kinsmen! I hereby declare that I have brought unto you a blessing in this world and in the world to come. I do not think there could be anyone else throughout the whole of Arabia, to come out with a better and more precious offer towards this nation than that of mine. I am commanded by my Lord to invite you all towards Him. Tell me! who amongst you will come forward to help me and to be my vicegerent? The spell of hush prevailing over the audience, was broken by impatient courage of Ali, the son of Abu Talib, who responded with enthusiasm and said, "O Prophet of God! I am the youngest of all here, yet I beg to offer myself to stand by you and to share all your burdens and earn the great privilege of being your vicegerent." The Prophet caused Ali to sit down. Again he put the question to the assemblage. All remained silent but Ali rose for a second time to repeat his fidelity, and was again ordered to sit down. When the Prophet repeated the same question to the congregation third time, he got no response. Ali again stood up and repeated his fidelity on which the Prophet remarked, "You are my brother, my collateral and vicegerent." This evoked the hostility of the Qoraish tribe towards the Prophet and his followers. They leapt angrily to their feet and walked out, and their murmurings and protests echoed back into the house as they passed through the courtyard into the street. On the following day, when the Prophet went to the Kaba, he was greeted with scornful gestures. "This is the man who claims to bring us messages from the heaven," they shouted and began to joke at him.

When the sufferings of the Muslims at the hands of the Meccans reached to its extreme in 615 A.D., the Prophet directed that those of them who could afford it should migrate to Abyssinia across the Red Sea, whose kings were known as the Negus (*Najashi*). As-Hama, the then Negus was a Christian. Under the direction of the Prophet, eleven men and four women from among the Muslims migrated to Abyssinia. The Abyssinian emigration gave the Meccans a conclusive proof that the Muslims were ready to run all risks, and undergo every form of hardship in the cause of Islam. The Meccans did their utmost to check the tide of emigration, but all in vain. It was not until seven years after the Prophet's flight from Mecca that they rejoined their Muslim brethren at Medina.

Having failed in all their attempts to impede the progress of Islamic mission, the Qoraish of Mecca called a summit conference and pledged themselves to a policy of social boycott of the Hashimites on a large scale. This implied the severance of all social, matrimonial and commercial ties of Meccans with Hashimites. The decree was written by Mansur bin Akrama and the scroll hung up on the wall of Kaba. On hearing of this, Abu Talib was thereby obliged to shift along with the entire family of Hashimites to a secluded valley fastness, known as *Shib* (quarter) of Abu Talib, on the eastern skirts of Mecca, cut off by rocks from the city except for one narrow gateway. The provisions, which they had carried with them, were soon exhausted. For days they went

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without food; water was scare; infants and children almost died of hunger. The sick and the infirm breathed their last painful breath without succour or sustenance. There was much weeping and wailing in the Muslim camp but there were no betrayers.

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The pitiable condition of the Hashimites continued for a period of three years, till the Qoraish were awakened to a sense of remorse on their dealings with the Hashimites. All at once it was discovered that the parchment in the Kaba, on which the decree was written, was eaten up by termites and only the words, "In the name of the Lord" (with which the Qoraish commenced their writings) had survived. The decree was, therefore, declared to be annulled, and was torn off, and approaching Abu Talib, the Meccan leaders requested him to come back to his original abode. Abu Talib accepted to resume his civic life along with all members of Hashimites. During the period the Prophet was shut up in the Shib of Abu Talib, Islam virtually made no progress outside.

In the year 619 A.D., not long after annulment of the social boycott, the Prophet suffered a great loss of Abu Talib and Khadija, who followed each other to meet their deaths within a short interval, which was a severe blow. One protected him with the influence that derived from his noble rank, while the other guarded him with her material and wealth. It was during this period that the *miraj* (ascension) had taken place.

Weighed down by the loss of his venerable protector and of his cherished wife, the Prophet turned to some other field for the exercise of his ministry, because the Meccans had rejected the words of God. Taif was about 75 miles south-east of Mecca, and a famous home of Banu Thaqif. Accompanied by Zaid, he arrived in Taif, and invited at first the three brothers of Umayr family to adore One God. His words caused a storm of indignation and his voice was drowned by clamours. He was wounded by stones, and Zaid endeavoured in vain to ward off. They incited to ruffians of the town to ridicule him. The ruffians drove him from the town, and the rabble and the slaves too followed, hooting, reviling and pelting him with stones for a distance of three miles, until they quitted the Prophet to pursue his way alone. Blood flowed from his both legs. He, wearied and mortified, took refuge in one of the numerous orchards, and rested under a vine.

On his return to Mecca during the night, the Prophet arrived at Nakhlah, and thence he moved to Hira. According to Ibn Sa'd (1:212), the Prophet sent words to Mutim bin Adi that he desired to return to Mecca, if he was assured protection. Mutim, although a non-believer, was a gentleman. He not only assured the Prophet of his protection according to Arabian custom, but called all of his sons who went to Kaba and remained on guard till he finished his religious obligations. Mutim also declared in Mecca that the Prophet was under his protection. He was sorely stricken in heart and lived in Mecca for some time, retired from his people, preaching occasionally, but confining his mission mainly to the strangers who congregated in Mecca and its vicinity during the season of the annual pilgrimage.

A ray of hope beamed in the interim in the north. At a distance of about 250 miles from Mecca was a town then known as Yathirab, and later as Medina. Its population was divided into two groups, the Jews and pagans. The pagans had two clans, Aws and Khazraj, who were generally at loggerheads with each other. Every year in the month of Rajab, the Arabs swarmed like locusts into Mecca. One day in Mecca, whilst sadly but yet hopefully working among the half-traders and half-pilgrims, the Prophet came upon a group of six men who were of Khazraj. Meeting them perchance, the Prophet led them to a declivity and recited to them the verses from Koran, enumerated the blessings of a good and pious life and beckoned them to the fold. Struck by his earnestness and the truth of his words, they embraced Islam. When they returned to their native Yathirab, they spread the news, with lightning rapidity that a Prophet had arisen among the Arabs in Mecca. The town was soon agog with stories of the new faith and its wonderful leader. So in the ensuing year another twelve pilgrims came to Mecca and made their vows at the same spot, which had witnessed the conversion of the former six. This is called the first pledge of Aqaba, from the name of the hill on which the conference was held. The following year, 622 A.D., the Yathirabites who had adopted the new religion repaired to Mecca. In the stillness of night, when all inimical elements appeared slumbering, these seventy-two pioneers of the new faith met under the same

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hill. The Prophet appeared among them, and vividly described to them the risk they incurred by adopting Islam. They replied with one voice that they adopted the religion fully conscious of the dangers that surrounding them. Thus was concluded the second pledge of Aqaba.

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It was the 13th year of the Prophet's mission when the clouds had gathered fast. The Meccan chiefs centered in their Council Hall (*darun-nadwa*), a chamber inside Kaba, to deliberate over what might be done with the Prophet. Stormy was the meeting, for fear had entered their hearts. Imprisonment for life, expulsion from the city, each was debated in turn for the Prophet. They decided then on a final and desperate remedy, namely to murder the Prophet. Murder by one man would have exposed him and his family to the vengeance of blood. The difficulty was at last solved by Abu Jahl, who suggested that a number of courageous men, chosen from different families, should sheathe their swords simultaneously in the Prophet's bosom, in order that the responsibility of the deed might rest upon all, and the relatives of the Prophet might consequently be unable to avenge it. The proposal was accepted, and forty youths were selected for the sanguinary deed. As the night advanced, and it was against the Arab sense of chivalry to kill any one within the four walls of his house at night hour. Hence, the assassins posted themselves round the Prophet's dwelling, and watched all night long, peeping now and then through a hole in the door to make sure that the Prophet still lay on his bed. In order to keep the attention of the assassins fixed upon the bed, the Prophet put his own green coverlet upon Ali, and bade him to lie on his bed; so as to fail the scheme of his enemies, and himself escaped.

The Prophet had guessed exactly what would be the reactions of the Meccans when they found he had gone. He had, therefore, not started for Yathirab with camel. He had gone on foot with Abu Bakr to Mount Thaur, about one hour's walk from Mecca. They reached Mount Thaur while it was still dark and concealed themselves in the innermost recess of a cave in the rocky hillside. A tracking party, following the footprints of the fugitives, reached the mouth of the cave. Abu Bakr, hearing the sound of their footsteps, grieved within himself. It was a critical moment when the sword of the blood-thirsty enemy was hanging on their heads. The Prophet quieted the fears of Abu Bakr with the words: "Do no be grieved, for surely God is with us." For full three days, the Prophet remained in the cave.

On the third night, they came out with two camels. Quickly the Prophet mounted and followed by Abu Bakr, rode into the desert night. They took a certain Abdullah bin Uraiqi, a non-Muslim as their guide. In order to avoid the main caravan tracks, they struck a diagonal course northwest toward the Red Sea. For nearly a week the journey continued over the parched, barren, mournful wasteland. On the seventh morning after the start of the flight, the oasis of Kuba, a few miles from Yathirab, was sighted. This flight from Mecca to Yathirab (Medina) is called the Hijra and when the Prophet entered Kuba, with it commenced the Islamic era on 1st Muharram (lunar month) of the Hijra, or on the date corresponding to July 16, 622 C.E. in the Julian calendar.

On the other side in Mecca, Ali slept fearlessly whole night on the Prophet's bed. R.V.C. Bodely writes in **The Messenger** (London, 1946, p. 113) that, "The morning breeze whispered over the desert. The dawn came mauvely from the east and showed the assassins braced to strike. As the first white rays of the rising sun hit the flat roofs of Mecca, the door of Muhammad's house opened. The men stood ready to spring. They then held back as their astonished eyes rested on the burly figure of Ali standing on the threshold carrying Muhammad's cloak over his arms." The assassins at first thought of killing him, but when they found him ready to defend himself, they gave up the idea and dispersed in search of the Prophet. Discomfited and unhappy, they immediately dispatched their best riders in pursuit of the fugitive. Up and down they hunted over all the tracks and passes leading out of Mecca, but found no trace of the Prophet.

Ali stayed three days at Mecca and handed back all the articles, which were entrusted, to the Prophet for safe custody, mostly by his enemies. He was also assigned for safe transport of the Prophet's daughter Fatima, the daughter of Hamza, another Fatima, his own mother, Fatima bint Asad, and his aunt, that was the daughter of Abdul Mutalib, a fourth Fatima. On account of scarcity of mounts, Ali had to travel on foot, and reached Kuba with bleeding feet. The Prophet

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embraced him, and dressed his feet. The Prophet stayed with the clan of Umar bin Auf at Kuba for 14 days, and during which time he laid foundation of the first mosque of Islam.

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The news of the Prophet's arrival at Kuba soon reached Yathirab and the city had been in eager expectation of his arrival. Each morning some people would go out on the outskirts to watch the appearance of their revered master. The tedious hours of impatient expectancy were at last over, and the illustrious visitor appeared on the horizon of Yathirab. News was brought to Yathirab that the Prophet was on his way. He entered the city on September 22, 622. Yathirab was wearing to look of jubilation all round. People came out to greet the Prophet, clad in their gayest attire. Women climbed to the tops of their houses and sang in chorus to welcome their noble guest. Young girls played on their tambourines and sang songs of welcome. There was an unprecedented merry-making, and when the Prophet came to the group of Umar bin Awf Najjari, the well-dressed girls came out of seclusion, danced and sang to the tune of music a ballad

Each tribe, which the Prophet passed through in the city, very eagerly desired the honour of his presence and requested him to take up his abode with them. He, refusing all these offers, said that the camel, which he rode on, was inspired and would take him to the proper quarter. The camel proceeded on to the eastern quarter, and knelt down in the open courtyard of the Banu Najjar, near the house of Abu Ayub Ansari. He took up his temporary residence in his house for about seven months, until a mosque with proper quarters for him was built.

After the Prophet's arrival in Yathirab, now known as Medina, the first thing to be done was to build a cathedral mosque. It was constructed on a plot with unbaked bricks and mud, and was roofed with palm-wood rafters. This mosque became known as the Prophet's Mosque (*masjid-i-nabwi*) was free from all kinds of artificialities and was a monument of simplicity.

Five months after his arrival in Medina, it was the Prophet's next task to find shelter and livelihood for the men who had accompanied him from Mecca. In their own home-town many of them were prosperous, but now they were all equally destitute. As a preliminary step, the Prophet enjoined the Muslims of Medina, now known as *Ansar* (the helpers) to adopt as brothers their co-religionists from Mecca, now known as *Muhajir* (the refugees), to share with them like their own kith and kin whatever they possessed, in prosperity and in want. He thus created in Anas's house a bond of brotherhood, known as "Fraternization" (*muwakhah*), comprising forty-five (or according to another authority, seventy-five) pairs between the Ansars and Muhajirs.

Another important task before the Prophet was to determine and clarify the relations between the various tribes and the Muslims in Medina. The Jews were a considerable power in Medina. It appears that they were Arabs by descent, but formed a distinct unit by reason of their adoption of Judaism. So the Prophet concluded a pact with the Jews, known as the Covenant of Medina (*mithaq-i-Medina*).

The Prophet had hardly breathed a sigh of relief in Medina when he was confronted with the series of military expeditions against the fronts of the heathen Meccans, known as the battle of Badr, Uhud and Ditch, which are described elsewhere.

In 6/628, the Prophet marched from Medina with 1400 Muslims for the purpose of performing pilgrimage in Mecca. They went unarmed, clad in the ritual dresses. When this caravan approached its destination, tidings came that the Meccans were bent on mischief, and might stop their entry into the town by force. So, the Prophet halted his followers at a place, called Hudaibia, and his men encamped round a well. Instead of directly attacking the pilgrim party as they originally intended, they now sent a messenger, named Suhail, to conclude with the Prophet the treaty of Hudaibia.

The time had now arrived for the Islamic mission to travel beyond the confines of the Arabian peninsula. So the Prophet dispatched his messengers to all the kingdoms known to his people, to the Roman Caesar, and the emperor of Iran, the governor of Egypt and the Negus of Abyssinia, the king of Ghassan, and the chief of Yamama. The message was identical to them all and neither

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political nor diplomatic expedients dictated either the choice or the status of the powers addressed.

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With the violation of the term of the Treaty of Hudaibia on the side of the Meccans, it paved way to the Muslims to conquer Mecca. The Prophet was impelled to march with a force of ten thousand Muslims. The move of the army started from Medina on 10th Ramzan, 8/January 1, 630. Having no courage to resist, the Meccans laid down their arms. The Prophet triumphantly entered Mecca at the head of a formidable force after a banishment lasting for years, on 20th Ramzan, 8/January 11, 630. Many had lost their nearest and dearest at the hands of the people now completely at their mercy. All of them carried in their hearts bitter memories of cruelty, persecution and pain inflicted by their now humble enemies. Yet none thought of vengeance or retribution, and none raised his arm against a defenseless foe.

After the conquest of Mecca, the Muslims stayed in the city for two weeks when a news soon broke out that a big army had been mobilized in the valley of Hunain to attack Mecca and to undo the victory of the Muslims. This time the Prophet assembled a force of twelve thousand warriors, which included two thousand non-Muslim Meccans, which is mentioned elsewhere.

The fate of the Muslims in the battle of Mauta also emboldened the Arabs and Romans of the frontier regions to enhance their mischief-mongering towards the Muslims. Thus, to restore the loss of prestige and to teach lesson, the Prophet marched with an army of thirty thousand from Medina to Tabuk, a well known place about midway between Medina and Damascus. He on that very occasion, appointed Ali as his caliph in Medina, and as a result, Ali did not take part in the battle of Tabuk. In the mid-Rajab, 9/late October, 630, the Muslims set out for Tabuk. This was the largest army that had ever mustered under the command of the Prophet. The army drawn up for the battle of Tabuk, known as the *Jaish al-Usrah* (the army of difficulty). So called because in the first place the journey had to be undertaken in the scorching heat of the summer and secondly, it was the time of reaping the harvest and ripening of fruit which made it very difficult to proceed.

Reaching the field of Tabuk, the Prophet encamped his army, where he came to know that the Romans in Jordan had withdrawn to Damascus, and dared not to come to arms with the Muslims, and therefore, the Prophet returned to Medina after a couple of days. This was the last campaign commanded by the Prophet.

When peace and order had been restored throughout the Muslim realm and the period of warfare was over and the people joined Islam in multitude, till in the course of some two years, there was one and but one religion - Islam - throughout the vast Arabian peninsula with a few Jewish and Christian exceptions here and there. The cry of *Allah-u-Akbar* resounded on all sides. Now it took the Prophet but two brief years, not only to bring the whole of Arabia under the banner of Islam, but at the same time to work a mighty transformation, sweeping away all corruptions and uplifting the nation to the lifties height of spirituality.

In 10/632, the Prophet set forth with a large concourse of Muslims, ranging in strength between ninety to one lac and twenty thousand bound on a farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. On his arrival at Mecca, and before completing all the rites, he addressed the assembled multitude from the top of the Jabal-ul-Arafat in words, which yet live in the hearts of all Muslims. This is called *hajjatul wida* (the farewell pilgrimage) and at times it is also named *hajjatul balagha* (the pilgrimage of the delivery of message). On 18th Zilhaja, 10/March 16, 632, the Prophet after performing farewell pilgrimage, halted at the plain of Ghadir Khum, where he declared Ali bin Abu Talib as his successor.

At about the middle of the month of Safar, in the 11th A.H., on Monday, the Prophet ordered his followers to make speedy preparations for an expedition against the people of Mauta in the Byzantine territory, and the sources go to say, to avenge the massacre of the soldiers, who had fallen in recent skirmishes.

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The Prophet was seriously taken ill for several days. At noon on Monday (12th Rabi I, 11/June 8, 632), whilst praying earnestly in whisper, the spirit of the great Prophet took flight to the "blessed companionship on high." So ended a life consecrated from first to last to the service of God and humanity. His apostleship lasted for 23 years, 2 months and 21 days (13 years, 5 months and 13 days in Mecca and 9 years, 9 months and 8 days in Medina).

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The Prophet was an embodiment or rather an institution by himself of many ethical code. No doubt, when a fair-minded person studies various aspects of the life of the Prophet as a man, head of family, a member of the society, a judge, an administrator, a teacher, a military commander and a guide, he comes to the conclusion that his all round perfection is a definite proof of his being a Divine Messenger. The Prophet made wonderful contributions for the welfare of humanity at large. First, he himself acted upon the divine message and then he asked to follow him. He established the rights of the people when rights were being usurped; he administered justice when tyranny was rampant everywhere; he introduced equality when undue discrimination was so common; and he gave freedom to the people when they were groaning under oppression, cruelty and injustice. He brought a message which taught man to obey and fear God only, and seek help from Him alone. His universal message covers all the aspects of human life, including rights, justice, equality and freedom. Edward Gibbon writes in **The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire** (London, 1848, 5:487) that, "More pure than the system of Zoroaster, more liberal than the law of Moses, the religion of Mahomet might seem less inconsistent with reason than the creed of mystery and superstition which, in the seventh century, disgraced the simplicity of the gospels."

ALI BIN ABU TALIB (11-40/632-661), 1ST IMAM

Ali, the son of Abu Talib and the cousin of the Prophet was born on Friday, the 13th Rajab in the 28th year of *A'am al-fil* (the year of elephants) or 600 A.D. inside Kaba in Mecca. He was brought up under the subtle care and affection of the Prophet. Ali himself cherished the memory of his childhood by saying: "The Prophet brought me up in his own arms and fed me with his own morsel. I followed him, wherever he went, like a baby-camel which follows its mother. Each day a new aspect of his character would beam out of his noble person and I would accept it and follow it as commanded." Ibn Abid Hadid (d. 655/1257) quotes Ibn Abbas as relating that the Prophet and Ali loved each other intensely. The Prophet was so fond of Ali that once when Ali was a young boy, he sent him out on some errand, and Ali took long time to return; he started getting worried and prayed to God, "O'Lord, do not let me die unless I behold Ali once again."

Ahmad bin Hanbal writes that, "There are not as many verses and traditions in the praise of any other companion of the Prophet as there are in the praise of Ali bin Abu Talib." Ibn Abbas says that, "There have not descended as many verses about anybody as have revealed about Ali." On another occasion Ibn Abbas narrates, "Three hundred verses of the Koran have been revealed in favour of Ali." Abdullah bin Ayyash bin Abu Rabiah says, "Ali's knowledge and insight were perfect and he was the first to embrace Islam and he has the honour of being the son-in-law of the Messenger of God. He alone had perfect ability to understand the traditions. He was very brave in fighting and very generous in charity." "The Muslim scholars unanimously concur with the fact," says Ahmad bin Hanbal in his **Masnad**, "that not one of the companions of the Prophet was ever praised by God and His Prophet for his virtues and estimation as was Ali." On one occasion when four of the Muslims complained to the Prophet concerning something that Ali had done, the Prophet was displeased and said, "What do you want from Ali? Ali is from me and I am from Ali. He is the guardian of every believer after me." (**Tirmizi**, 2:298) On another occasion, the Prophet is reported to have said, "Ali is my brother, my executor and my successor. You obey him" (**Tabari**, 2:63).

Regarding the first man to profess faith in the prophetic mission, Ibn Hisham (1:245), Tabari (2:56) etc. write that Ali bin Abu Talib was the first male to accept Islam. While Nuruddin Ali bin

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Ibrahim Shafayee writes in **Sirat-i Halabiya** that, "Ali was like a son unto the Prophet, therefore, his faith from very start was the faith professed by the Prophet." Masudi (d. 346/958) writes in his **Muruj adh-Dhahab** (2:283) that, "The general conscientious of opinion amongst the Muslim historians and theologians is that Ali was never a non-Muslim or prayed before idols, therefore, the question of his embracing Islam does not and cannot arise."

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In 614 A.D. about four years after his divine call, the Prophet summoned his close relatives. Thus, Ali prepared a banquet, a lamb and a bowl of milk for the entertainment of forty Hashimite guests. When the Prophet asked the assembly, who will assist him in his mission, no answer was returned. It was only Ali on that occasion stood up to offer his services for the cause of Islam.

During the night of the Prophet's migration from Mecca, it was indeed a most dangerous moment for Ali, when he volunteered to sleep fearlessly in Prophet's bed. The task was not a small undertaking for a young man, but Ali showed an unflinching fidelity. He was called upon to deputize the Prophet at the risk of his own life, for it was highly probable that the assassins, furious at being foiled of their chief objective would kill Ali in his stead. Tabari (2:163) writes that, "Ali's willingness to sacrifice his life for the Prophet is unique in the history of mankind."

During the 2nd year of migration, Ali's betrothal took place with Prophet's daughter Fatima, which had been actualized in the month of Ramzan, but the nuptial ceremonies were performed two months later without pomp and ostentation. Ali at the time of marriage was 21 years, 5 months and 15 days old, while Fatima was 15 years, 5 months and 15 days old.

Ali is said to have taken part in all the battles with the exception of the expedition of Tabuk. His dauntless courage, fortitude and unflinching loyalty made him the main hero of all these campaigns. It was the valour of Ali and the strength of his arms that turned the table at critical juncture in the battlefield, and it was the victories won by him that ensured the triumph of Islam over polytheism. On several occasions, he fought single-handed against overwhelming odds and emerged out victorious.

During the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet entered Kaba and removed 360 idols. The Meccans looked on aghast while the Prophet, with a stroke of stick held in hand, smashed the idols, which lay in the lower cavities of the walls. To break those idols, which were placed higher up, out of reach of either hand or stick, the Prophet solicited the help of Ali. Ibn Sa'd (3:13) and other compilers of hadiths, like Tirmizi (2:299) and Ibn Majah (p. 12) write that the Prophet said, "Ascend on my shoulders and then shatter with this stick all the idols which are placed up above." Ali placed his feet on the shoulders of the Prophet and completed the great purge. He cast down all the idols, relics of the age of ignorance, also climbed to the top of the Kaba and pulled Hubal from its place and threw it down.

The succession to the Prophet is the key question in Shi'ite Islam, and a principal factor separating them from the Sunnis. The Prophet left Mecca on 14th Zilhaja, 10 after performance of pilgrimage. His caravan reached a little before noon to Ghadir al-Khum on 18th Zilhaja, 10/March 16, 632. Here, the Prophet declared Ali bin Abu Talib as his successor after receiving the Koranic revelation (5:67).

There was an assembly hall (*saqeefa*), about 6 miles from Medina, belonging to Banu Sa'd, where the Arabs used to discuss their mutual problems. Upon the death of the Prophet, the Ansars and Muhajirs of Medina, numbering about 300 to 325, had assembled at Saqeefa Banu Sa'd to choose their leader. There was not a single man from Banu Hashim. Abu Bakr and Umar bin Khattab also joined during the time when the people were about to take an oath of allegiance from Abu Ubaidah as their caliph. The proceeding stopped and a hot argument started among them. Historian Tabari (3:198) writes, "The Ansars or some were arguing that they would never take oath from anybody except Ali". When the swords were about to unshield, Umar bin Khattab asked Abu Bakr to raise his hand, and took oath of allegiance, then Abu Ubaidah and the rest of people followed it.

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Abu Bakr was thus elected at the age of 60 years. During his period, whatever initial support there may have been for Ali's candidature melted away in the face of Ali's own refusal to advance the temporal claim. Ali reverted to leading a quiet life, almost confined to the four walls of his house. He had no choice but to reconcile himself with the existing order, since he had considered that any action would lead to the destruction of infant Islam. His compromise with the political order can be well asserted from the fact that he did not demonstrate any sort of opposition and continued to live in Medina. Abu Bakr died in 13/634 after ruling for 2 years, 3 months and 10 days. He nominated Umar, whose age at that time was 52 years, ruled for 10 years, 6 months and 4 days; and died in 23/644. The third caliph Uthman was selected at the age of 70 years, who was assassinated in 35/656 after ruling for 11 years, 11 months and 14 days. Wardi writes in **Wu'az al-Salatin** (p. 217) that, "It was the Umayyad who engineered the murder of Uthman, with Muawiya instigating the murder and Marwan working out the death." Immediately after the murder of Uthman, a crowd rushed to Ali in the mosque, urging him to accept the caliphate. Eventually, Ali consented and became the fourth caliph. This implies that the temporal and spiritual powers once again joined together about 24 years, 8 month and 28 days after the death of the Prophet.

Ali bin Abu Talib was placed in a difficult time, and the dice of fate appears to have been loaded against him. The period of four caliphs were subdivided into four distinct periods. It falls to the lot of Ali that he should pilot the bark of Islam in times of the most dangerous internecine dissensions. To maintain a proper hold of state administration under such conditions was a difficult as to keep a boat steady on stormy waters. Nevertheless, Ali displayed a high example of affection and sympathy for brother-Muslims, which is without parallel.

During Uthman's caliphate, all the important governorships of the Muslim states were in the possession of the unworthy members of the Umayyad family. Ali dismissed them in the state, but Muawiya the governor of Syria revolted, demanding "revenge for the blood of Uthman." Ali announced that the names of the assassins should be reported, so that they could be executed. He had also started enquiries, but the only witness to the assassination was Uthman's widow, Naila, who deposed that two persons whose names she did not know had killed Uthman.

After Ali had taken over as caliph, exactly what he had anticipated took place. Muawiya exercised the motives of old enmity towards Ali. The charge of Uthman's murder was trumpeted up against Ali and afforded Muawiya's excuse enough to unfurl the standard of revolt against him. Muawiya incited the Syrians against Ali to a feverish pitch by indoctrinating them with a belief in the false charge against Ali.

Ali had hardly breathed a sigh of relief when he was confronted with the series of military expeditions against the fronts of A'isha, Muawiya and Kharijis, i.e., battle of Camel, Siffin and Nahrawan, which are described elsewhere.

Ali's stay in Basra was not long after the battle of Camel. Having appointed Abdullah bin Abbas as the governor, Ali repaired to Kufa in 36/657 and made it the seat of his government and the capital.

Many of the Kharijis, after the battle of Nahrawan, had gone to Mecca, where they had frequent political meetings in the holy sanctuary, devising plans to avenge their relatives who had fallen in Nahrawan. Abdur Rahman bin Muljam agreed to kill Ali. He went to the cathedral mosque of Kufa just before the break of dawn, where he took up his position in the narrow passage leading to the mosque and waited for Ali to enter. The moment Ali set foot in the mosque, while it was still dark, the assassin attacked with the sword, but missed. When Ali was in prostration, Abdur Rahman struck Ali the point of his poisoned sword and fled away. Shortly afterwards the congregation began to assemble in the mosque for the dawn prayers, and there they found Ali lying wounded on his prayer mat. Abdur Rahman was soon arrested, but no antidote could be found for the poison and Ali's condition rapidly deteriorated, and died on 21st Ramzan, 40/January 29, 661 at the age of 63 years, and bequeathed the office of Imamate to his son

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Hussain. The period of Ali's caliphate lasted for 4 years and 9 months, and the period of his Imamate since the death of the Prophet was for 29 years.

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His first wife was Fatima, the only daughter of the Prophet, during whose lifetime, he did not marry any other lady. By Fatima, he had three sons, Hasan, Hussain and Mohsin, who died in infancy; and two daughters, Zainab and Umm Kulsum. By his wife, Umm Banin bint Hizam, Ali had four sons, viz. Abbas, Jafar, Abdullah and Uthman. By Layla bint Masud, he had Ubaidullah and Abu Bakr. By Asma bint Umyas, he had Yahya and Muhammad Asghar. By Umm Habiba bint Rabia, he had one son, Umar and a daughter, Ruqaiya. By Amama bint Abil Aas, he had a son, named Muhammad al-Awasat. By Khawla bint Jafar bin Qais al-Hanafiya, he had Muhammad Akbar, who was known as Muhammad ibn Hanafiya. By Umm Sa'id bint Urwa bin Masud, he had Ummul Hasan and Ramla.

Despite his engagements in the civil wars, Ali however made many reformations in the state. He was the first to realize land revenue from peasants. He exempted taxes on horse-trade to promote its trade. He included forests as a source of revenue for the first time, and necessary tax was imposed on it. He reserved a specific part in poor-rate for the poor. He codified Islamic laws for the judges, and set up courts in every province. Ali was the first to make metalled roads in the state, and constructed many forts, notably Astkhar fort. He reorganized the army and erected military posts everywhere. He was the first to build a strong bridge on river Euphrates. Ali's period is also acclaimed for the promotion of education, and he was the first to patronize education and as a result, about 2000 students in Kufa got free scholarship.

By putting together the evidence from a variety of sources, one sees that Ali bin Abu Talib attempted to start the Islamic coins during his caliphate, which could not be continued due to the then political cataclysm in the Islamic state. Maurice Lombard writes in **The Golden Age of Islam** (Netherlands, 1975, p. 110) that, "The Caliph Ali was the first to attempt a reform, at Basra in 660, by introducing a Muslim *dhiram* with the inscriptions in Kufic script, but this attempt failed."

It is difficult to design a portrait of the qualities and merits of Ali bin Abu Talib, for he was a paragon of virtues and fount of knowledge. He was indeed a living encyclopaedia of learning. The Sufis traced their esoteric chains back to Ali. Abu Nasr Abdullah Sarraj writes in **Kitab al-Luma fi't-Tasawwuf** (ed. Nicholson, London, 1914, p.129) that when Junaid Baghdadi (d. 298/910) was asked about Ali's knowledge in esoteric field, he said, "Had Ali been less engaged in wars, he might have contributed greatly to our knowledge of esoteric things for he was one who had been vouchsafed *ilm al-ladunni* (divine knowledge)."

HUSSAIN BIN ALI (40-61/661-680), 2ND IMAM

Abu Abdullah Hussain bin Ali was born on the 3rd Shaban, 4/January, 626 in Medina. When the news of his birth reached to the Prophet, he came to his daughter's house, and took the child in his arms affectionately, and named him Hussain. He spent his early life in the lap of the Prophet, who loved him too much. Among the numerous sayings of the Prophet concerning Imam Hussain is the one to this effect that, "I owe my being to Hussain, and Hussain owes his being to me." (**Ibn Majah**, 1:33). It is further related that once, while addressing in the mosque, the Prophet was interrupted all of a sudden by the cry of a boy, whose voice resembled that of Hussain. He asked to a person to enquire whether Hussain was weeping. The Prophet was soon reported that the weeping boy was a student, whose teacher had punished him due to negligence to his lesson. The Prophet sent for the teacher and said, "Please do not punish this boy so much that causes him to weep, as his voice resembles that of my child Hussain."

Imam Hussain was 6 years old during the demise of the Prophet and his mother. He was married to Shahr Banu, the daughter of Yazdigard, the last Sassanid king of Iran. During his living in

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Medina, since the death of his father, Imam Hussain was mostly engaged in the intellectual pursuits with his followers.

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After the abdication of Hasan, Muawiya became an absolute ruler of the Islamic state, which he diplomatically acquired on the ground of "Revenge of Uthman's blood." It must be pointed out that when he became absolute ruler, neither he investigated the assassin of Uthman, nor he did care for this issue. It was mere a pretext to establish the Umayyad rule in Syria.

Perhaps the most important event in the history of the development of the Shi'ite passion was Muawiya's nomination of his son Yazid to succeed him. He could not act in this direction as long as Hasan lived, and it is significant that immediately after the news of Hasan's death, Muawiya began actively on the project, which was not so easy. He had to move with great caution and used all devices: diplomacy, gifts, bribes, and finally threat and oppression.

Muawiya died in 60/680 and with his death, his son Yazid issued orders to his governor of Medina, Walid bin Utba, to exact homage from Imam Hussain and Abdullah bin Zubayr. Walid bin Utba summoned them in his palace. Abdullah bin Zubayr did not go and fled to Mecca. Imam Hussain went to the palace alone. Walid read to him Yazid's letter and asked for the recognition of the new caliph. Imam Hussain replied uncommittedly that the oath, in order to be valid, must be made in public and that the governor should arrange a public gathering in the mosque where he would also be present. With this reply, the Imam rose to leave the palace. Walid bin Utba paid for his lenient attitude towards the Imam, and was shortly dismissed from his post.

Abdullah bin Zubayr, who reached Mecca prior to Imam Hussain and gathered people around him against Yazid. He is reported to have been harbouring secret ambitions for the caliphate himself. But as soon as Imam arrived in the city, the influence for Abdullah bin Zubayr's candidature melted away. The people abandoned Abdullah bin Zubayr and gathered around Imam Hussain. In Kufa, as soon as the people received a word of Muawiya's death, they held a series of meetings, expressing their loyalty for Imam Hussain. They sent out numerous letters, urging the Imam to come in Kufa to guide them and release from the tyranny and oppression of the Umayyad. The first letter Imam Hussain received on 10th Ramzan, 60/June 15, 680; it was signed by Suleman bin Surad al-Khuzai, Al-Musayyab bin Najaba, Rifa bin Shaddad, Habib bin al-Muzahir, and Muslim bin Awsaja on behalf of the Kufans.

Both eastern and western research alike does not lose sight of the fact that Imam Hussain had no political ambition. There is no evidence that he tried, while at Mecca, to enlist active supporters from among the people who gathered around him, or to propagate his cause among the mass of people who congregated in Mecca for the pilgrimage. He never attempted to depute his emissaries to stir up any rebellion in provinces such as Yamen and Iran, which were sympathetic to the house of Ali. Imam Hussain never mustered even a small force against the Umayyad, which was an easy for him. And above all, had he acted promptly on the invitation of Kufans, while the governorship of the city was in the hands of the weak Noman bin Bashir, he might have had a fair chance of success. His speedy arrival would not only have forestalled any effective action on the part of the Umayyad government, but would also have stirred real enthusiasm among the Kufans.

In spite of hundreds of letters sent by the Kufans, Imam Hussain did not take a hasty decision, but sent his cousin, Muslim bin Aqil, to Kufa with instructions to ascertain the truth of these representations and report back of his survey. As soon as Muslim bin Aqil arrived in Kufa, there was held in the house of Suleman bin Surad a meeting, which for the sake of secrecy, was attended only by the leaders of Kufa. Very soon, Muslim bin Aqil quickly gathered thousand of pledges of support, and the number of people who registered their names and swore allegiance to Muslim bin Aqil in the name of Imam Hussain is variously given as 12,000 and 18,000. Soon the movement became so widespread that Muslim bin Aqil was able to preside over the public meetings from the pulpit in the cathedral mosque of Kufa. Confident of Kufan support, Muslim bin Aqil consequently wrote to Imam Hussain to come to Kufa and assume spiritual leadership of the people. His letter was sent to Imam Hussain by Abis bin Habib ash-Shakiri. Having been assured of the extent of Kufan enthusiasm, Imam Hussain decided to go to Kufa.

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Receiving word of Muslim bin Aqil's activities in Kufa, Yazid no longer trusting the mild-tempered, Noman bin Bashir, and appointed Ibn Ziyad to take charge of Kufa. Ibn Ziyad delivered a terrifying speech in Kufa, declaring death and unprecedented punishment for the sympathizers of Imam Hussain, while making tempting promises for those who would prove their loyalty to Yazid. The Kufans were stricken by awe and fear, completely lost hearts, and ultimately abandoned Muslim bin Aqil. He was captured and beheaded together with Hani bin Urwa, in whose house he had stayed. This attitude of the Kufans once again demonstrated the weakness of their disloyalty in their veins.

While Imam Hussain was making preparations for departure from Mecca, things took a reverse turn for him in Kufa. He left Mecca on 8th Zilhaja, 60/September 10, 680, the same day Muslim bin Aqil had been killed. While he was heading towards Iraq, Ibn Ziyad made Kufa a scene of terror and horror, and imposed strict martial law. He made a declaration that anyone suspected of supporting Imam Hussain, would be hanged without trial, his house would be set on fire and his property would be confiscated. Ibn Ziyad also blockaded all the roads leading from Mecca to Kufa and gave strict orders forbidding anyone from entering or leaving the territory of Kufa. The Imam knew all these measures, but continued his journey undeterred.

Imam Hussain reached Taneem, a few miles from Mecca. He thence started and made a junction at a place called Sifah, where according to Tabari (2:242) he met poet Farazdaq and inquired about the conditions in Kufa. Farazdaq replied, "Their hearts are with you, but their swords are with your enemies." Imam Hussain resumed his journey and reached Salabia, then Waqesia. Khuzaimia was the fifth resting place, and thence he advanced and alighted at Zubala. When he reached Ath-Thalibiya, he received word from some travellers of the executions of Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin Urwa. After leaving it, Imam Hussain reached Batn Aqiq, a place few stages from Kufa; and upon learning of the strong military force stationed at Qadisiya, he changed his route to enter Kufa from another direction. Hussain bin Numayr, the Umayyad commander at Qadisiya, was informed of Imam's change of route, and sent a detachment of one thousand troops under the command of Hur bin Yazid at-Tamimi to intercept him. When they appeared on the horizon, Imam ordered his people to pitch their tents at a place called Dhu Husm. The army of Hur soon reached Imam Hussain. The day was very hot and Hur's army had run out of water. Imam ordered his men to give water to the Umayyad troops and their horses. Hur had a regard for the Imam, and even when four of the leading Kufans, who had managed to escape from the city and joined Imam, Hur did not dare to use force. Imam explained to his adversaries the reason, which had caused him to set out. According to Tabari (2: 298), Imam said: "O people of Kufa! you sent to me your delegations and wrote me letters saying that you had no Imam and that I should come to unite you and lead you in the way of God.....But if you have changed your minds, have become ignorant of our rights, and have forgotten your delegations and repeated appeals to me to come for the sake of your religion, I shall turn back."

Then Imam Hussain showed Hur two sacks full of letters of the Kufans, but Hur said that he knew nothing, and that he had come with the orders of Ibn Ziyad to arrest him and his party. Imam refused to submit, but still Hur did not use force. It was however agreed that Imam Hussain should keep on travelling along the Euphrates in the opposite direction from Kufa until fresh orders arrived from the governor and that Hur would follow closely.

When they reached the district of Ninawa, a horseman arrived from Kufa, and gave a letter to Hur from Ibn Ziyad, ordering him not to allow Imam to make halt except in a desert place without fortifications of water. Imam, therefore, advanced a bit turning to the left when Hur's contingent stopped him from moving further and asked him to alight, adding that the Euphrates was not far from there. Imam said, "This is the stage of distress (*karb*) and trial (*bala*)" and got down from his horse (**Tabari**, 2:232), thus this place became known as *Karbala*, about 25 miles north-west of Kufa; where Imam pitched his tents when it was 2nd Muharram, 61/October 2, 680.

On the 3rd Muharram, the situation deteriorated as Umar bin Sa'd arrived with the fresh Umayyad force of 4,000 men and assumed overall command on the field. Ibn Sa'd learned that

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the Imam now intended to return to Medina, but Ibn Ziyad sent orders that all the "rebels" should render homage to Yazid. On 7th Muharram, an embargo was placed on the water supply to the Imam's camp, and for that Ibn Sa'd stationed a force of 500 cavalry on the road to the river. Imam and his party suffered terribly from thirst. A daring sortie led by Abbas, the brother of Imam, however, managed to reach the river, but succeeding in filling only a few water skins.

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Ibn Sa'd was still trying to persuade Ibn Ziyad to find some peaceful solutions to avoid shedding the blood of the grandson of the Prophet, but all in vain. Ibn Ziyad sent his final orders to Ibn Sa'd through Shimar bin Dhul Jawshan, either to attack or hand over the field command to Shimar. Soon after receiving these orders on the evening of 9th Muharram, Ibn Sa'd advanced with his forces towards the Imam's camp, who sent Abbas for a respite of one night, which was granted. Imam Hussain assembled his relatives and followers and induced them to abandon the field to his fate. The relatives and followers of the Imam refused to leave or survive after him, and demonstrated an unshakable devotion to the Imam, and said, "By God, we will never leave you alone until all of us are killed and our bodies are torn to pieces. By this we will have fulfilled our duties to you" (**Tabari**, 2:322). Thus, the whole night was spent in prayer, recitation of Koran and worship. The borrowed night ended, and the fateful morning of 10th Muharram brought with it the summons of the tragic result of the family of Ali bin Abu Talib and its handful supporters. Imam drew up in front of the tents his small band of 72 men: 32 horsemen and 40 foot soldiers of varying ages ranging from 70 years old Muslim bin Awsaja to the 14 years old Kassim bin Hasan bin Ali. Zuhayr bin Qayn was given command of the right wing, Habib bin Mazahir al-Asadi of the left, and Abbas bin Ali was entrusted with the standard of the Hashimite house.

Shortly before the fateful battle began, Hur bin Yazid, the Umayyad commander, the first who confronted Imam and forced him to halt at Karbala, was now confronted and agitated by his own conscience and feelings. He suddenly spurred his horse and threw himself at Imam's feet.

Hence, a skirmish ensued, but the men of Imam kept within their camp, where they could only be reached by the archers. From time to time there were single combats in defiance. It began in the morning and ended shortly after noon as both parties desisted from the fight at the hour of noontide prayer. It was in the afternoon that the battle became fiercer, and Imam Hussain's handful supporters one after the other fell fighting in front of him. The first to be killed was Ali Akbar, the son of the Imam, followed in quick succession by the son of Muslim bin Aqil, the sons of Aqil, three brothers of Abbas bin Ali, then Kassim, the son of Hasan; and eventually there remained only two: Imam Hussain and his half-brother Abbas bin Ali. With broken hearts and distressed, both brothers went together and fell upon the enemy. The enraged Abbas penetrated deep into the ranks of his foes, became separated from Imam Hussain, and was killed some distance away. Alone and weary, Imam returned to his tents to console the terrified women and children and bid them farewell for the last time, and to consign spiritual authority of Imamate to his son, Zayn al-Abidin. Exhausted and wounded, Imam sat in front of the main tent, sheltering the women and children. Yet nobody dare to attack him, until Shimar ended the delay. He caused Imam to separate from the tent, and several soldiers fell upon him. Sinan bin Anas bin Amr raised his sword to make the final blow on Imam Hussain, and cut off his head. On 12th Muharram/October 12, however, when the Umayyad forces left Karbala, the people of Banu Asad from the nearby village of Ghadiriya came down and buried the bodies of Imam Hussain and his companions on the spot where the massacre had taken place.

Imam Hussain had concluded five marriages, by which he had four sons and two daughters. His first wife was Shahr Banu, who was the mother of Zayn al-Abidin. By Layla, Imam Hussain had one son, Ali Akbar, or Ali Asghar. His third wife belonged to the clan of Kaza'a, who gave birth of a son, Jafar. By Rabab, he had a son, Ali Asghar, or Abdullah Asghar; and a daughter, Sakina. By Umm Isac, he had one daughter, Umm Fatima.

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ZAYN AL-ABIDIN (61-94/680-713), 3RD IMAM

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Abu Muhammad Ali bin Hussain, known as Zayn al-Abidin (ornament of the pious) and by the titles of *as-Sajjad* (the prostrator) and *az-Zaki* (the pure), was born in Medina on 38/658. He would feed the hungry persons at night, from one to three hundred families; and in daytime, he would have a hundred sheep a day killed for meat, which would be distributed to the needy people. Much of his time he spent sitting on an old piece of matting, fasting all day, or eating a little barely bread. D.M. Donaldson writes in **The Shi'ite Religion** (London, 1933, p. 110) that, "One day, he claimed to get nourishment from merely the smell of food."

Shahr Banu, the mother of Imam Zayn al-Abidin was the daughter of the last Sassanid emperor Yazdigard (d. 31/652) of Iran. She is reported to have died soon after the birth of her son, Zayn al-Abidin. In memory of his mother, Imam Zayn al-Abidin used to utter these words: "I am the son of the two chosen stocks (*ibn al-khairatain*). The Prophet was my grandfather, and my mother was the daughter of Yazdigard."

When the soldiers of Yazid were bent on destroying Imam Hussain and his dear ones at Karbala, sparing neither old nor young, the survival of Imam Zayn al-Abidin was nothing but a miracle. His severe illness had prevented him from taking up arms, and confined him to bed. The morning of 12th Muharram saw a peculiar procession leaving Karbala for Kufa. After reaching Kufa, the captives were presented to Ibn Ziyad. It is however not quite clear how long the captives were detained in Kufa, but it seems that before long they had been sent to Damascus at Yazid's court. The reaction of Yazid is reported to have been different from that of Ibn Ziyad, and he regretted the haste with which his governor had acted.

One Friday in Damascus, the congregation in the cathedral mosque, requested Imam Zayn al-Abidin to address them. Taking Yazid's permission, the Imam delivered a sermon. The congregation was moved - some heaved sighs, some wept when suddenly Yazid beckoned the *muazzin* to call for the prayers. Yazid resolved not to keep Imam Hussain's family in his capital, and finding that Imam Zayn al-Abidin preferred a quiet and virtuous life, he made arrangement for them to return to Medina.

A storm of grief and anger raged in every heart in the Muslim world because of the tragic event of Karbala, putting great deal of thrill of horror. It caused rise to a universal feeling of revulsion against the tyrants. From the start of 62/681, the people of Medina turned out the Umayyad governor, and beleaguered the Umayyad ashes in the town. Ibn Athir (d. 630/1234) writes in **Kamil fi't Tarikh** (Beirut, 1975, 1:186) that Marwan bin Hakam, the sworn enemy of Ahl al-Bayt was also unable to stay safely in the city. The only person he could find to offer protection to his wife was Imam Zayn al-Abidin, who sent her safely to Taif escorted by one of his sons. Yazid sent an army under Muslim bin Aqba to suppress the rising in Medina. According to Tabari (7:6-7), "He ordered that for three days on end, Medina should be given over to rapine and murder, and that the army might appropriate to its own use whatever it might capture including the prisoners of war." Dinawari writes in **Akhbar at-Tiwal** (p. 260) that the instructions to Muslim bin Aqba were given that, "If you obtain victory over the people of Medina, plunder the town for three days without break." The orders were carried out on the 28th Zilhaja, 63 and for three full days and nights, Medina was given over to plunder. The Umayyad forces gained such ascendancy that the remaining citizens of Medina avowed allegiance specifying that they would be the slaves of Yazid who would possess plenary powers over their lives, properties and dependents, but Imam Zayn al-Abidin and his family were left unmolested, and when the citizens of Medina were forced to take oath of allegiance of Yazid, the Imam was exempted.

The Meccans too had been aroused against Umayyad. Abdullah bin Zubayr, who had long yearned to secure the office of caliph for himself, considered it an opportune moment to advance his interest. He delivered a forcible speech, decrying the inconstancy of the Kufans, and paying rich tributes to Imam Hussain. The Meccans became alienated from Yazid and agreed to pledge their allegiance to Abdullah bin Zubayr. After the savage massacre and ravage of Medina, Yazid's

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commander, Muslim bin Aqba advanced on Mecca as ordered by Yazid. On his way to Mecca in 64/683, he was picked up by death. Before his death, he had made Haseen bin Namir the head of the army. Thus, Haseen invaded Mecca and laid siege to the Kaba. Tabari (7:14) writes that, "Not only stones but also live wood were catapulted at Kaba which caught fire." This was Yazid's last operation after which he died in 64/683.

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As soon as Yazid died, the people of Mecca rose once again, and began to hunt the Umayyad soldiers in the city. Thus, it was difficult for Haseen bin Namir and his forces to move from Mecca to Syria. They started their journey from Mecca in secret, and meanwhile they felt acute need of fodder for their horses. Tabari (7:342) writes that when Imam Zayn al-Abidin knew the difficulties of the Umayyad forces, he came down from Medina with grass and foods and rescued them from starvation. Haseen bin Namir was highly touched with the generosity of the Imam, and offered him to accept the caliphate of Damascus with his all supports. Imam Zayn al-Abidin did not answer him, and went away after casting a smile.

The tragic event of Karbala stirred religious and moral sentiment, particularly among those of the Kufans who had so zealously invited Imam Hussain to Iraq to guide them on the path of God. But when the Imam came to Iraq, they did not stand with him in the hour of trial. Soon after the event of Karbala, the Umayyad governor Ibn Ziyad returned to Kufa from his camp at Nukhayla, the Shiites, according to Tabari (7:47), "were stung with shame at their faint-heartedness. They took to mutual recrimination as they painfully realized the enormity of neglecting to go to Imam Hussain's help, and thereby leading him to his death in their close neighbourhood, since he had come to Iraq only to their invitation." They thought that they must make similar sacrifices to obtain God's forgiveness. They believed that they could only prove their real repentance by exposing themselves to death while seeking vengeance for the blood of Imam Hussain. Hence they named themselves as the *tawwabun* (the penitents).

The movement of the Tawwabun began under the headship of five of the oldest trusted associates of Ali, with a following of a hundred diehard Shi'ites of Kufa. The five leaders of the Tawwabun, Suleman bin Surad al-Khuzai, Al-Musayyab bin Najaba al-Fazari, Abdullah bin Sa'd bin Nufayl al-Azdi, Abdullah bin Walin at-Taymi, and Rifa'a bin Shaddad al-Bajali; had always been in the forefront of all Shi'ite activities in Kufa. At the end of 61/680 they held their first meeting in the house of Suleman bin Surad. According to Tabari (2:498), the first to speak was Al-Musayyab bin Najaba al-Fazari, who said: "We invited the son of the daughter of our Prophet to come to Kufa to guide us on the right path, but when he responded to our call, we became rapacious for our own lives until he was killed in our midst. What excuse would we have before our Lord, and before our Prophet when we must meet him on the day of resurrection, while his most beloved son, family and progeny were massacred in our midst. By God, there is no other way for us to expiate ourselves for the sin except to kill all his murderers and their associates or be killed. Perhaps by doing so our Lord may forgive our sin. You must, therefore, now select someone from among you as your leader, who can organize and mobilize you under his command and proceed with the plan of seeking God's forgiveness by taking the action which has been proposed."

Finally, Suleman bin Surad had been chosen as their leader, who also made a forceful speech in the meeting, and said: "We used to crane our necks eagerly in looking for the arrival of the members of the Prophet's household, but when they arrived, we acted with such indifference and laxity that in our land and not far from us, the Prophet's son was put to the sword. When he raised his voice in demanding justice and help, there was none to respond to him to say, `Here I am, standing in thy service'. The man of sin made him the target of their arrows and spears, and killed him. Now if you wish to get up, rise! God's wrath has been stirred. Resolve here and now not to return to your wives and children till you have taken steps to win God's pleasure. Now that you consider sinners, prepare yourselves for sacrifice. Sharpen your swords, and straighten your spear-heads." (**Tabari**, 7:48) He then entered into correspondence with Shi'ite leaders in other cities, namely Sa'd bin Hudhayfa al-Yamen in Madain and Al-Muthanna bin Mukharriba al-Abdi in Basra. The movement of Tawwabun, however, went on secretly for three years, increasing in number and strength, and waiting for an appropriate time. Meanwhile, the death of Yazid induced the Tawwabun to come out in the open. They succeeded in gaining support of 16,000 Kufans.

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Suleman started final preparations for action, and the penitents embarked upon a course of direct action against Yazid's rule.

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Mukhtar also spurred his horses towards Kufa, and tried to bring the Tawwabun in his mission. The main body of Tawwabun, however, refused to join Mukhtar, though at least 2,000 of these had registered their names with Suleman bin Surad did switch over to him. According to their plan, the Tawwabun raised their call for "revenge for the blood of Hussain" (*la latha'rat al-Hussain*) in 65/684, and gathered at Nukhayla, a suburb of Kufa, from where they had to march against the forces of Ibn Ziyad, the Umayyad governor who had been responsible for the massacre of Karbala upon the instructions of Yazid. Only 4,000 out of 16,000 enrolled members of Tawwabun assembled at Nukhayla, where their supporters from Madain and Basra yet not arrived. Meanwhile, another 1,000 out of 4,000 had left the field. Thus Suleman led the remaining 3,000 and marched to Karbala to the grave of Hussain, where they mourned. They then proceeded to the village of Qarqisiya, the fifth stage of Karbala, and ultimately reached Ayn al-Warda, and engaged the twenty thousand Umayyad horsemen fiercely, shouting: "Paradise! Paradise! for the Turabites." The battle lasted for three days, in which Suleman bin Surad was killed. Finally, Rifa bin Shaddad, advised the survivors to return, and brought them to Qarqisiya after getting defeat.

An exhaustive scrutiny of the earliest sources suggests that the small number of Tawwabun survived the battle of Ayn al-Warda, went over to Mukhtar and accepted Ibn al-Hanafiya as their Mahdi. These Kufans, who formed the backbone of Mukhtar's movement, called themselves Shi'at-i Mahdi, Shi'at-i Haqq or Shi'at-i Muhammad. Consequently, a sect emerged with the name of Kaysaniya. The power of Mukhtar soon ended by his being killed with the majority of his followers, Kaysaniyas. These sectarians, some of who lived as far away as Khorasan, continued to recognize Ibn al-Hanafiya as their Imam Mahdi, who died in 81/700, who believed in his concealment and return, while the majority accepted the eldest of his sons, Abu Hashim as the next Imam, who himself also claimed to have inherited the scrolls of his father.

Mukhtar Thaqafi appeared in Kufa as a revenger of Imam Hussain's blood. His mission was the same as that of the Tawwabun insofar as the revenge of Imam Hussain's blood, but differed in that he intended to achieve political authority. Mukhtar, therefore, tried to persuade the Tawwabun not to take any hasty action and to join him for a better success. The Tawwabun refused to join Mukhtar, as they had no wish to participate in any doubtful adventure. Mukhtar then turned to Imam Zayn al-Abidin to seek his support. Baladhuri writes in **Ansab al-Ashraf** (5:272) that, "Mukhtar wrote to Imam Zayn al-Abidin to show his loyalty to him, asking if he could rally the Kufans for him. He sent with the letter a large sum of money. Imam refused this offer and declared Mukhtar publicly to be a liar who was trying to exploit the cause of Ahl al-Bayt for his own interest." Mukhtar then turned to Ibn al- Hanafiya, the third son of Ali from a Hanafite woman. On his part, Ibn al-Hanafiya did not repudiate Mukhtar's propaganda for his Messianic role, he nevertheless, maintained a non-committal attitude and never raised his claims to the heritage of Imam Hussain. In the event, however, the hesitation and political inactivity of Ibn al-Hanafiya emboldened Mukhtar more and more to exploit his name for his own interest. Mukhtar propagated that Ibn al-Hanafiya was the Mahdi, and he himself was his minister (*vizir*) and commander (*amir*).

Abdullah bin Zubayr proclaimed his caliphate in 61/680 and established his power in Iraq, southern Arabia and in the greater part of Syria. One week after Mukhtar's arrival in Kufa, Abdullah bin Zubayr sent Abdullah bin Yazid al-Khatmi as governor of Kufa. While, after the departure of Suleman bin Surad, Mukhtar's activities aroused the suspicions of the nobles of Kufa, who reported the new governor to warn him against the movement, saying that it was more dangerous that of Suleman bin Surad, for Mukhtar wanted to revolt against the governor in his own city. Mukhtar was hence imprisoned, where he remained until the return of the remnant of Suleman bin Surad's followers from the battle of Ayn al-Warda. He was however released only after the request of his brother-in-law, Abdullah bin Umar and other ten influential men, on the condition that he would not engage in any subversive activities against the governor of Kufa as long as he was in power. Abdullah bin Zubayr, considering Mukhtar's movement dangerous,

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appointed a new governor for Kufa, Abdullah bin Muti in 65/685. Meanwhile, Mukhtar became enough capable and began to prepare to seize Kufa in 66/685. He stationed near Dair Hind in the Sabkha, and his army contained about five hundred soldiers. To counter him, the governor sent Shabath bin Rabi al-Tamimi with three thousand soldiers to Sabkha, and Rashid bin Iyas with four thousand soldiers from Shurta. Mukhtar sent his nine hundred men in command of Ibrahim to meet Rashid, and three hundred men in command of Nuaim bin Hubaira against Shabath. In this battles, Mukhtar succeeded and captured Kufa. Nevertheless, the circumstances eventually changed when Abdullah bin Zubayr proclaimed himself caliph in 64/683, Ibn al-Hanafiya and Abdullah bin Abbas, with their followers, refused to pay him homage on the grounds that he had not yet been unanimously recognized as caliph. In 66/685, Abdullah bin Zubayr detained Ibn al-Hanafiya and his family and threatened them with death if they did not pay homage within a specified time. Ibn al-Hanafiya sent a letter to Mukhtar, apprising him of his perilous condition. Thus, Mukhtar marshalled out four thousand men and managed to liberate to Ibn al-Hanafiya, who left Mecca for Taif. In 67/686, Mukhtar subdued Ibn Ziyad and killed him. At length, Kufa was brought under an incursion by Musab bin Zubayr with a huge army, in which Mukhtar was killed in 67/ 687. On the other hand, Abdullah bin Zubayr was killed in a battle against Hajjaj bin Yousuf in 73/692 after ruling for almost nine years.

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Imam Zayn al-Abidin died in 94/713. He had seven wives by which he had 11 sons and 4 daughters. His first wife was Fatima bint Hasan bin Ali, who gave birth of Muhammad al-Bakir. His other sons were Abdullah, Zaid, Umar, Hasan, Hussain Akbar, Hussain Asghar, Abdur Rahman, Suleman, Ali Jawad and Asghar. His daughters were Khadija, Fatima, Umm Kulsum and Aliya.

MUHAMMAD AL-BAKIR (94-114/713-733), 4th IMAM

Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Ali, known as al-Bakir was born on 1st Rajab, 57/October 15, 677. He assumed Imamate at the age of 37 years. He possessed extensive knowledge in religion matters, and because of that, according to Yaqubi, he was nicknamed *al-Bakir* (split open, or revealer of secret science), as it is said, *tabaqqara al-rajulu fi'l aw fi'l mal* means *the man became abundant in knowledge* or *he enhanced himself in knowledge*. But according to Ibn Khallikan, he was so called because he collected an ample treasure or fund (*tabaqqar*) of knowledge. Thus, he was also called *Baqir al-ulum* (opener of the knowledge). Many jurists attracted by the fame of his learning, such as Muhammad bin Minkadir, Abu Hanifah an-Noman, Qatada bin Diama, Abdullah bin Muammar al-Laythi, Nafi bin Azraq etc.

The period of Imam Muhammad al-Bakir is noted for the rule of the Umayyad caliph Suleman (96-99/ 715-717), Umar bin Abdul Aziz (99-101/717-720), Yazid II (101-105/720-724) and Hisham (105-125/724-743). Like his father, Imam Muhammad al-Bakir was politically quiescent and refrained from openly putting forward any claim.

Zaid, the half-brother of Imam Muhammad al-Bakir had asserted a claim to the Imamate on the basis that the Imam must come forward publicly for his claims for Imamate and Caliphate. He believed that if an Imam wanted to be recognized, he had to claim his right with a sword in hand. Thus, the first Alid of the Hussainid line who rose against the Umayyads was Zaid. The popularity of Zaid's movement overshadowed Imam's efforts to attacking only the friends and followers of Zaid. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to contest Zaid's claim. However, the Imam and Zaid quarrelled over this point, for when the latter asserted that an Imam must rise against the oppressors, the former remarked: "So you deny that your own father was an Imam, for he never contested the issue." Zaid's revolt against the Umayyads took place in Safar, 122/December, 740 when he came forward and summoned the people to espouse his cause. Zaid was warned by his brother, Muhammad bin Ali bin Hussain, not to put any reliance on the people of Kufa, but Zaid did not heed on his brother's warning and led the Kufans in a vain rebellion. Yousuf bin Umar Thaqafi, the governor of the two Iraks, dispatched Abbas al-Murri with an army against Zaid. He

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was struck by an arrow, and died of his wound. Zaid's son Yahya fled to Khorasan and led an uprising after three years. He was killed in 125/743 and met the same fate as his father. Later on, the Zaidiyya recognized no designation for the Imamate, or any strict hereditary principle. Thus the movement of Zaid however ended in failure.

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Imam Muhammad al-Bakir was the first to establish the legal school of Ahl al-Bayt. Kashi records an important tradition in his **Rijal** (p. 289) that, "Before the Imamate of Muhammad al-Bakir, the Shi'as did not know what was lawful and what was unlawful, except what they learned from the people; until Abu Jafar (al-Bakir) became the Imam, and he taught and explained to them the knowledge (of law), and they began to teach other people from whom they were previously learning." It indicates that until the time of Imam Muhammad al-Bakir, there were hardly any differences in legal practices among the Shi'ites of Medina, Kufa and elsewhere. This was an earliest move in the formation of the Shi'ite jurisprudence.

Caliph Abdul Malik is credited to have regulated monetary system in Islamic states. The Roman gold *dinar* and the Iranian silver *dhiram* had been in circulation in the Arabian regions. One *dinar* weighed 4.25 grams, inscribed with the Christian symbol of cross, while a *dhiram* weighed 1.40 grams. Abdul Malik was perplexed by the situation and called for a meeting of the grand consultative assembly, in which the Imam was also invited. The proposal for minting Islamic coins had been accepted, but when the question of its inscription arose, Imam Muhammad al-Bakir recommended for the Islamic legends on both sides of the coin, which was also approved. Thus, the first Islamic coin was struck in 76/695 in the mint installed at Damascus. The gold coin was *dinar*, the silver coin called *dhiram*, and the copper coin was named *fals*. These bore Islamic inscriptions, and were standardized both in weight and metal.

Imam Muhammd al-Bakir articulated an implication of the doctrine the Imamate in Shi'ism. He also imparted the doctrine of *taqiya*, but it was left to his son to give it a final form and make it an absolute condition of the faith.

Many leading jurists used to visit Imam Muhammad al-Bakir to discuss the legal problems. Among them were Muhammad bin Minkadir, Abu Hanifah an-Noman, Qatada bin Diama, Abdullah bin Mu'ammar and al-Laythi etc. He greatly emphasized also on the importance of knowledge and its promotion.

Imam Muhammad al-Bakir died in 114/733, and was buried in the Baqi cemetery near his father's grave. He had four wives, the first being Umm Farwa bint Kassim bin Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, who gave birth of Jafar Sadik and Abdullah al-Fatah. The second wife, Umm Hakeem bint Asad bin Mughira Thaqafi had two sons, Ibrahim and Abdullah. The third wife was Layla, who gave birth of Ali and Zainab. While Umm Salama was the daughter being born by the fourth wife.

JAFAR SADIK (114-148/733-765), 5TH IMAM

Abu Abdullah Jafar bin Muhammad was born in 80/699 at Medina. Ibn Khallikan (1:327) and others determine his birth from the event of *Amm al-Juhaf* (the year of the flood) in Mecca, which according to Tabari (2:320) occurred in 80/699. According to the Arabic lexicon, *jafar* means *stream*. His father had referred to him "the best of all mankind" and "one in charge of the family of Muhammad" (*qaim al-Muhammad*). He is also known by the titles of *al-Sadik* (trustworthy), *al-Sabir* (patient), *al-Tahir* (pure one) and *al-Fazil* (excellent one).

Yaqubi writes that it was customary for scholars, who related anything from Imam Jafar Sadik, used to say: "the Learned One informed us". Even Malik bin Anas (d. 179/795) is reported to have said when quoting Imam Jafar Sadik's traditions: "The *thiqa* (truthful) Jafar bin Muhammad himself told me that ." Abu Hanifah (d. 150/767) was also a Imam's pupil for two years. The house

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of Imam Jafar Sadik in Medina took a real shape of a regular academy, where a galaxy of talented scholars of jurisprudence, traditions, philosophy, exegesis and theology attended the studies. It was perhaps the first academy in Islam in respect of Islamic ideology which Imam Jafar Sadik founded in Medina. The concourse of the varied minds in Medina gave an impetus to the cultivation of science and literature, where a stream of unusual intellectual activity flowed towards other Islamic states, and soon led to the growth of philosophical tendencies among the Muslims.

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Abu Hashim, the eldest son of Ibn al-Hanafiya (d. 81/700) continued the mission of Mukhtar, and his followers then became known as Kaysaniyas. Caliph Hisham poisoned him, but before his death in 98/718, he quickly rushed to Humayma, and bequeathed his right to the caliphate and charge of the Kaysaniya sect to Muhammad bin Ali as he had no son.

Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet had a son, Abdullah, who never tried to establish his own caliphate. Abdullah and his son, Ali bin Abdullah resided in Humayma. It was the latter's son, Muhammad bin Ali to have taken the charge of Kaysaniya sect from the dying Abu Hashim. Thus, the house of Abbas inherited the party and organization of Abu Hashim along with his claims. Muhammad bin Ali led the Kaysaniya sect, and propagated in the name of Ahl al-Bayt, declaring that the caliph should be from Alid descent and the Umayyads had no right to rule. It was mere an ostensible slogan to perpetuate wide supports of the Alids and nourish future political ambition. Muhammad bin Ali died before attaining his objective and handed on his claims to his son, Ibrahim. He began to dispatch emissaries, starting with Khorasan, where the bulk of the Kaysaniya faction resided.

In the meantime, the newly acclaimed Umayyad caliph Marwan sought to strike at the centre of the whole movement by arresting Ibrahim. He is said to have strangled him as Yaqubi writes, by having his head put into a bag of lime until he died. Ibrahim had two brothers, Abul Abbas and Abu Jafar Mansur, both of whom escaped to Khorasan. And very soon these two brothers returned, supported by Abu Muslim's victorious troops, to lead the insurgents in their final struggle in the West. Their way had been prepared for them in Kufa by propaganda that had been carried on for more than twelve years.

In Kufa, the local reprehensive Abu Salama Hafs, the Kaysaniyan follower of Abu Hashim, known as Wazir-i Al-i Muhammad was very popular figure. Tabari (3:27) writes that, "When the news of the death of Ibrahim reached Kufa, Abu Salama on the suggestion and advice of some other Shi'as of Kufa, intended to establish the Imamate of Alids." Accordingly, he wrote letters to Imam Jafar Sadik, Abdullah al-Mahd and Umar bin Ali Zayn al-Abidin, asking each one of them in turn to come to Kufa in person and he would support their claims of Imamate. The messenger was instructed first to contact the Imam, and only if he refused, then to go to Abdullah al-Mahd, and in case of his refusal, to Umar bin Ali Zayn al-Abidin. When the messenger presented the letter first to Imam Jafar Sadik, the latter called for a lamp, burned the letter and said to the messenger, "Tell your master what you have seen" (**al-Fakhri fi'l Adab as-Sultaniya**, Cairo, 1966, p. 109). The messenger then came to Abdullah al-Mahd, who accepted the offer.

Meanwhile, things took a reverse turn for the Abbasid family. The army commanded by Abul Abbas and Abu Jafar Mansur, came from Khorasan to Kufa, where Abu Salama announced that Abu Muslim had now made it possible for the world of Islam to shake itself free from the Umayyads, and declared that it was to this end that he called upon them to recognize Abul Abbas, the brother of the murdered Ibrahim, as their rightful Imam and Caliph. Abul Abbas mounted the pulpit and made his inaugural speech, in which he "identified the glory of God with his own interest and those of his house. He named the Abbasids as the Ahl al-Bayt from whom uncleanliness was removed, and denied that the Alids were more worthy of the caliphate" (**Tabari**, 3:29). The excited crowd expressed their approval and gave their allegiance to Abul Abbas as the first caliph of the Abbasid caliphate in 132/750.

Marwan, the Umayyad caliph was at that time advancing towards Kufa with a huge army. He encountered the army from Khorasan at a point on the greater Zab river, and the battle of Zab

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lasted for two days. It was closely contested struggle, and the day was turned when Marwan's horse ran away without its rider. He managed to escape, but was discovered and killed. So fell the last of the Umayyads in 132/750. The total duration of the Umayyad rule till the time when Abul Abbas assumed the power of the Abbasid rule was 90 years, 11 months and 13 days.

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The Alids were totally disappointed while noticing the Abbasids devouring power in the name of Ahl al-Bayt. The first task before Abbas as- Saffah therefore was to break the alliance with the Alids who were yet strong and could be dangerous. During his short rule of less than four years, he was kept fully occupied in meeting numerous insurrections and in ruthlessly killing those Alids who were suspected. The first to pay his life was Abu Salama. Abul Abbas died in 136/754, during which period, the Alids in Medina, disorganized by the frustration of their hopes, kept quiet. But when Abu Jafar Mansur, the brother of Abul Abbas as-Saffah assumed the caliphate, the Alids embittered by the usurpation of their rights by the house of Abbas, began to voice their complaints. An-Nafs az-Zakia, the son of Abdullah al-Mahd openly refused to take oath of allegiance to Mansur. Tabari (3:200) also writes that, "Malik bin Anas declared that the oath sworn to the Abbasids was no longer binding as it had been taken under compulsion."

In 137/755, Abu Muslim was lured to Iraq and murdered. Caliph Mansur thus had to face the most threatening opposition from the Alids. He concentrated his efforts on two basic points. The first was to justify the rights of his house on religious ground. The second was to gain for his caliphate the acceptance of the Muslims. He also persecuted Imam Jafar Sadik many times, but the latter retained his equanimity.

Imam Jafar Sadik died in 148/765 in Medina after the Imamate of 34 years and 7 months. Upon his death the Imamate devolved upon his elder son, Ismail. He had seven sons and four daughters. His first wife was Fatima. For the first 25 years he had only two sons by his first wife, Ismail and Abdullah and a daughter Umm Farwa. His second wife was Hamida, the mother of Musa Kazim and Muhammad. Besides, Abbas, Ali, Asma and Fatima were also the children of Imam Jafar Sadik.

ISMAIL BIN JAFAR SADIK (148-158/765-775), 6TH IMAM

Abu Muhammad Ismail, surnamed al-Wafi was born in Medina between 100/719 and 103/722. Imam Ismail is also known as an absolute Lord (*az-azbab-i itlaq*). He was born by the first wife of Imam Jafar Sadik, named Fatima bint al-Hussain al-Athram bin al-Hasan bin Ali. Shahrastani (1076-1153) writes in **Kitab al-milal wa'l nihal** that during the lifetime of Fatima, Imam Jafar Sadik never got another marriage like Muhammad with Khadija and Ali with Fatima. Hatim bin Imran bin Zuhra (d. 498/1104) writes in **al-Usul wa'l Ahakam** that, "Ismail was the most perfect, the most learned and the most excellent of the sons of Jafar as-Sadik."

The early life of Imam Ismail is obscure except few fragmented records. **Asraru'n-Nutaqa** writes, "When Ismail completed 7 years of age, the Lord of religion (Jafar Sadik) declared him the master of religion and his heir-apparent, as his next in descent. He guarded him from his other sons, kept him away from the contact with the public, and his education went on under his own supervision." According to **Marifat Akhbari'r-Rijal** (comp. after 280/890) that in the absence of his father from Medina, Ismail acted on behalf of his father as the head of family. It is also related in **Uyun'l-Akhbar** (comp. 842/1438) that Mualli bin Khunyas, a wealthy Iranian and a famous narrator was killed and his property was confiscated by the order of the Abbasid governor of Medina, Daud bin Ali. Masudi (d. 346/958) also asserts in his **Kitab al-Tanbih wal Ishraf** (Leiden, 1894, p. 329) that Daud bin Ali had killed many persons by order of Abul Abbas, the first Abbasid caliph and the number of victims was about eighty persons. While in the matter of Mualli bin Khunyas, however, Imam Jafar Sadik was absent from Medina, therefore, Imam Ismail solved the dispute in 133/751.

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Riyah bin Uthman al-Murri, the Abbasid governor in Medina burnt the house of Ahl al-Bayt, and Imam Ismail was decided to be killed. Ahmad bin Ali Najashi (d. 450/1058) writes in his **Kitab al-Rijal** (Bombay, 1917, pp. 81-2) that once caliph Mansur summoned Imam Jafar Sadik and his son Ismail to Iraq, where he found no chance to kill them, and thus their lives were spared, but Bassam bin Abdullah al-Sayrafi was executed instead. Muhammad Hussain al-Muzzafari quotes Imam Jafar Sadik as saying in his **al-Sadik** (2:119) that, "Ismail was planned two times for killing, but I prayed for his life, and God protected him."

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The succession issue of Imam Jafar Sadik has become a mystery in the extant sources. We are faced with fact as with legend and myth, conjecture, hypothesis and prejudice of the historians. Committed in the heat of strife by the Shi'ite authors, they were continuously repeated by those who followed them. And finally, all this was inherited by the orientalists, who, after relying too much on these crumbs, endorsed many of these errors.

Imam Ismail was declared several times by his father as his successor. According to **Asraru'n-Nutaqa** (comp. 380/990), Imam Jafar Sadik said, "He is the Imam after me, and what you learn from him is just the same as if you have learnt it from me." It is also related that when the health of Imam Jafar Sadik became impaired, he summoned the most trusted amongst his followers, and those members of his family who were alive, and did what his predecessors had done, i.e., he handed over the authority of Imamate to Ismail. The most trusted followers of Imam Jafar Sadik supported Imam Ismail, notably Abu Hamza Thabit bin Abu Sufiya Dinar as-Samali (d. 150/767).

W. Ivanow (1886-1970) writes in **Ismailis and Qarmatians** (JBBRAS, Bombay, 1940, p. 57) that, "According to the overwhelming majority of the available sources, both sectarian and of their opponents, Imam Jafar appointed as his successor his eldest son Ismail, by his first wife, a highly aristocratic lady, great grand-daughter of Hasan." W. Montgomery Watt writes in **The Formative Period of Islamic Thought** (Edinburgh, 1973, p. 271) that, "The Ismailites derive their name from the fact that they consider that the Imam after Jafar as-Sadik was his son Ismail and not Musa al-Kazim."

The historians refer to the tradition that Imam Ismail had died during his father's lifetime, but the followers of Imam Ismail refused to believe this rumour. Shahrastani (1076-1153) writes in **Kitab al-milal wa'l nihal** (London, 1984, p. 144) that, "Some of them (followers of Ismail) say that he did not die, but that his father had declared that he had died to save him from the Abbasid caliphs; and that he had held a funeral assembly to which Mansur's governor in Medina was made a witness."

During the rule of the first Abbasid caliph, Abdullah as-Saffah, the Alids in Medina kept quiet and affairs remained stationary. But when Mansur assumed the power in 136/753, the Alids embittered by the usurpation of their rights. Thus, an-Nafs az-Zakia, the son of Abdullah al-Mahd refused to take the oath of allegiance to Mansur. It was the month of Ramzan, 145/December, 762 when the Abbasid commander Isa bin Musa spurred his horses towards Medina to crush the uprising of an-Nafs az-Zakia. It was very critical moment, and many families evacuated the city. On this juncture, Imam Ismail also managed to leave Medina secretly with the outgoing caravans. Tabari (3:226) and Baladhuri (d. 279/892) in **Ansab al-Ashraf** (5:617) write that, "On 12th Ramzan, 145 (December 4, 762), Isa bin Musa camped at al-Jurf, where he entered into correspondence with many notables of Medina, including some Alids. Many of them left the city with their families and some even joined Isa, a move which created a sense of insecurity and led to a large scale evacuation of Medina." When the veritable fighting took place with the Abbasids, an-Nafs az-Zakia was left with only a small number of his followers. Tabari (3:249) writes that, "His followers took to flight, and he himself was killed on the 14th Ramzan, 145 (December 6, 762)." His brother, Ibrahim, wandering from Medina to Aden, Syria, Mosul, Anbar until he finally settled in Basra in 145/762 to propagate for his brother. He also rebelled two months after his brother's revolt, and seized control of Basra.

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Tradition has it that Imam Ismail went to Basra after leaving Medina, but it seems improbable as after the defeat of an-Nafs az-Zakia in Medina in 145/762, his brother Ibrahim mustered a large army in Basra, hatching a massive revolt against the Abbasids, therefore, Imam Ismail must have hidden himself elsewhere in Arabia, and when the condition had become congenial, he would have harboured himself in Basra. Ibrahim left Basra for Kufa after some time, but was killed in a battle at Bakhamri, about halfway between Wasit and Kufa.

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The critical examination of the sources suggests that the Abbasids had added a twist to this puzzle after few years with the help of the predeceased tradition for Imam Ismail, broadcasting everywhere that Imam Jafar Sadik had changed the *nass* (investiture) in favour of his other son, Musa Kazim. This newly contrived theory took its early nourishment among the people who lacked the concept of the Imamate. The later sources, trusting on it, however endorse three different reasons for the change of *nass* i.e., Imam Ismail's indulgence in drink in 138/755, his intriguing in the extremists circles in 143/760, and his death during his father's life time in 145/762. It deserves to note that some bombastic stories of Imam Ismail's indulgence in drink and his alleged association with the extremists have been condemned by many historians. Mufazal bin Umar as-Sayrafi however relates that Imam Jafar Sadik, in view of his son's piety had already warned the people in Medina that, "Do not wrong Ismail" (*la tajafu Ismaila*).

Caliph Mansur had not yet exhausted in his plan, for he had another card to play, and there is a reason to suppose that the story of change of *nass* had been concocted in the Zaidite orbits. It was rolled in public most probably after the death of Imam Jafar Sadik in 148/765, otherwise the Imam himself would have refuted it. It aimed to force Imam Ismail to expose to repudiate the claim of Musa Kazim. But, as we have heretofore seen that Imam Ismail had tenaciously determined not to expose as it was a diplomacy of the Abbasids to arrest him. Consequently, the predeceased tradition took its root. Imam Ismail's exposition would have also given free rope to the Abbasids to upbraid Imam Jafar Sadik, who is said to have produced a document to caliph Mansur, bearing signature of the persons, testifying the alleged death of his son.

The Abbasids had gained power on the slogans of the Alids. Later, it took a political shape to the right of caliphate in the house of Abbas on religious ground. Abbas as-Saffah was to be succeeded by his son like the Imamate's doctrine in the house of Ali bin Abu Talib from father to son. Conversely, Abbas as-Saffah was succeeded by his brother, Mansur. He determined to have a same effect that a brother could succeed by a brother. Thus, the Abbasids seems to have put into circulation a tradition of change of *nass* in the house of Imam Jafar Sadik by putting forth the claim of Musa Kazim. Thus, the Abbasids gained more than one benefit. Many Shi'ite followers, who had acquired the knowledge of the doctrines of Imamate from Imam Muhammad Bakir and Imam Jafar Sadik, however, ruled out the theory of change of *nass*.

Imam Jafar Sadik is also reported to have said: *Inlillah fi kullo shain bida illah imamah* means, "Verily, God makes changes in everything except in the matter of Imam." It tends to prove that once Ismail had been designated as an Imam, the spiritual authority of Imam Jafar Sadik came to the hands of his successor, and the status of Imam Jafar Sadik becomes same as he was before acquiring spiritual authority from his father. This point merits further indication that Imam Jafar Sadik had no power to cancel, revoke or alter the first *nass* in favour of Imam Ismail, and therefore, the tradition of change of *nass* carries no historicity. The European scholar Marshall Hodgson writes in **The Order of the Assassins** (Netherland, 1955, p. 63) that, "Such a withdrawal (of *nass*) evidently was not historical." Nawbakhti (d. 310/912) writes in **Kitab Firaq al-Shi'a** that, "Yet another version is that by appointing his son, Ismail, as an Imam, Jafar Sadik thus resigned. Ismail was therefore a real Imam, and after him, the Imamate has to pass to his son, Muhammad." Shahrastani (1076-1153) also writes in **Kitab al-milal wa'l-nihal** (p. 144) that, "Designation (*nass*), however, cannot be withdrawn, and has the advantage that the Imamate remains in the descendants of the person designated, to the exclusion of others. Therefore, the Imam after Ismail is Muhammad bin Ismail."

The Abbasids brought Musa Kazim to lodge claim for his right on one side, and made an intensified search of Imam Ismail on other, indicating that Imam Ismail was a legitimate Imam in

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the eyes of the Abbasids. W. Ivanow writes in **Ismailis and Qarmatians** (JBBRAS, Bombay, 1940, p. 58) that, "Musa apparently was recognized by the secular authorities as the legitimate successor of Imam Jafar in his position, so far as it was concerned with the outer world." W. Montgomery Watt also writes that the political moderates had preferred Musa Kazim, vide **The Formative Period of Islamic Thought** (Edinburgh, 1973, p. 271). The Abbasids mustered a large following for Musa Kazim in Medina, and the snares of spies were also planted to watch signs of disloyalty emanating from him. The Abbasids then intended to gather the scattered Shi'ites at Medina under the leadership of Musa Kazim, and strike a final blow upon them to get an end of the concept of the Imamate.

Abul Khattab (d. 167/783) was an eminent disciple of Imam Jafar Sadik. He was first to have preached the Shi'ite doctrines tinctured with esoteric interpretation. For quite some time, he was closely associated with Imam Jafar Sadik, who had commissioned him as his chief *da'i* in Kufa. When Imam Ismail had been in Iraq, he adopted the title of *Abul Khattab* most probably after 151/769 for exercising *taqiya*. Nawbakhti in **Kitab Firaq al-Shi'a** (Istanbul, 1931, pp. 60-61) and al-Qummi (d. 300/912) in **Kitab al-Maqalat wa'l-Firaq** (Tehran, 1963, p. 83) write that the followers of Abul Khattab (i.e., Ismail) became known as Khattabiyya, believing that "the divine light had transferred from Jafar Sadik into Abul Khattab, and on the death of the latter, it passed into Muhammad bin Ismail." The term *Abul Khattab* here was the epithet of Imam Ismail. Abul Khattab however was killed most possibly in 167/783.

Besides, Imam Ismail had to assume the pseudonym of al-Mubarak in certain cases to protect his life. Al-Mubarak was a servant of Imam Ismail in Medina. In all probability, *al-Mubarak* was also the epithet of Imam Ismail. More evidences of the application of the name *al-Mubarak* to Ismail have now come to light, lending strong support to W. Ivanow's hypothesis, vide **The Alleged Founder of Ismailism** (Bombay, 1946, pp. 108-112), describing that, "I have happened upon such clear and unequivocal testimony concerning al-Mubarak. The fact that it was in reality the surname of Ismail b. Jafar is revealed in at least four different passages in the early Ismaili esoteric work, **Sullamu'n-Najjat** by Abu Yaqub as-Sijistani" (p. 111). It can be also ascertained from another work of Abu Yaqub as-Sijistani, entitled **Ithbat al-Nubuwwat** (Beirut, 1966, p. 190).

Hence, another small following of Imam Ismail became known as Mubarakiyya. The Fatimid Imam al-Mahdi had sent a letter in Yamen after 308/921, which is reproduced by Jafar bin Mansur al-Yamen in **al-Fara'id wa Hudud ad-Din** (pp. 13-19), in which the Imam has also disclosed that the Imams descending from Imam Jafar Sadik wished to resuscitate the true *dawat*, and feared the treachery of hypocrites, therefore, they assumed names other than their own, and used for themselves esoterically names denoting the rank of proofs (*hujjats*) and styled themselves as Mubarak, Maymun and Sa'id because of the good omen in these names.

The terms Mubarakiyya and Khattabiyya therefore, were the original names of the nascent Ismailism, as well as the regional identifications of the followers of Imam Ismail, who, on the whole, merged into the main fold of Ismailism in the time of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail. Concluding his judgment, al-Mutawakkil (532-566/1137-1170) writes in his **Kitab Haqa'iq al-Marifa** as quoted by Bernard Lewis in **The Origins of Ismailism** (London, 1940, p. 35) that, "The Ismailiyya are the Mubarakiyya and the Khattabiyya."

Imam Ismail mostly lived in Salamia, and then moved to Damascus. Mansur knew his whereabouts, and wrote to his governor to arrest him, but the Imam quitted Damascus for Basra. Imam Ismail's presence in Basra was marked in 151/769. According to **Tarikh-i Jhangusha**, "A paralytic begged alms of him. Ismail took him by the hand and he was healed; and rising to his feet he departed in his company. Ismail also prayed for a blind person and he recovered his sight."

Imam Jafar Sadik had realized the significance of a tight, well-knit and secret organization to face the emerging challenges in Arab society. For that purpose, he employed his Iranian client (*mawla*), named Maymun al-Qaddah, who had a skill for organizing the vast network of an

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underground mission. The Arabs, it must be noted, were not traditionally and temperamentally suited for secretive and underground functioning. They had always lived in an open and free society in the desert without the paraphernalia of state and political intrigues.

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De Lacy O'Leary writes in **Short History of the Fatimid Khilafat** (London, 1923, p. 25) that, "The Ismailians alone have inherited the accurate knowledge of secret mysteries bequeathed by Jafar as-Sadik to his son Ismail." W. Ivanow writes in **Ismailis and Qarmatians** (JBBRAS, Bombay, 1940, p. 59) that, "The successors of Ismail were therefore compelled to pay more attention to the other aspect of Imam Jafar's heritage - the philosophical and esoteric theories, which were more in demand here. This probably defined the further course of the evolution of Ismailism, which though it never gave up its strictly Islamic substance, had, nevertheless, to reconcile it with the philosophy of the time."

Imam Ismail died in Salamia after bequeathing the office of Imamate to his son Muhammad. According to **al-Usul wa'l Ahakam** by Hatim bin Imran bin Zuhra (d. 498/1104) that, "Ismail had sent his *da'is* to all parts and ordered him (Muhammad) to administer the oath in his name according to the custom of all preceding Imams. When his death drew near, he appointed as his heir, his son Muhammad who showed great perfection."

The predeceased tradition assigns Imam Ismail's death in 145/762, but **Dustur al-Munajjimin** (comp. 450/1056) places it in 152/769. According to the Ismaili tradition, Imam Ismail died in 158/775, and was interred in Salamia. Besides Muhammad, he had a son called Ali, who was born in 130/748 and a daughter, Fatima.

MUHAMMAD BIN ISMAIL (158-197/775-813), 7TH IMAM

Abu Abdullah Muhammad, surnamed ash-Shakir was born in 122/740 in Medina. He passed his early life with his grandfather for 24 years and 10 years with his family in Medina. He however kept himself silent so long as he lived in Medina. He most probably left Medina soon after the death of his grandfather in 148/765.

The Abbasid caliph Mansur also died in 158/775 and was succeeded by his son Mahdi. He also died in 169/785 and was succeeded by his son, Hadi. He died in 170/786, and then his brother, Harun ar-Rashid became the next ruler till 193/809. He was also succeeded by his son, Amin.

The earliest description of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail occurred in the work of Tabari (3:2218). It is learnt in the 4th volume of **Uyun'l-Akhbar** (comp. 842/1438) that Imam Muhammad bin Ismail resided in Medina from where he sent his *da'is* not only to spread Ismailism, but to search for a land of refuge where he could live unscathed. When Harun ar-Rashid learnt news of it, he sent his officials to arrest and bring the Imam to his court. When the caliph's men came to the house to carry out the orders, the Imam entered an underground passage he had constructed inside his house and remained concealed until they had left. When the search had abated, he started on his journey, leaving behind his two sons. His whereabouts had been kept a closely guarded secret only the few specially privileged being acquainted with it and even they being pledged to the strictest secrecy.

The Abbasids had instituted an intensive search for Imam Ismail, because they were well aware that Musa Kazim was not the true successor, otherwise he would have been executed very soon. They failed to trace out Imam Ismail and his son. On the other side, the Abbasids noticed its counter effect in Medina, where Musa Kazim was being truly adhered as an Imam. Thus, Musa Kazim was arrested, who died in prison in 183/799. He should have been arrested and executed in 148/765, had he been truly succeeded his father.

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Imam Muhammad bin Ismail made his footing in Iran and Syria accompanied by Maymun al-Qaddah. The 'Abbasids' enmity was daily growing in intensity. Apprehending lest the enemies should resort to some violent measures against him, the Imam assumed the name of Maymun al-Qaddah to elude discovery. Thus, the name Maymun al-Qaddah came to be used by two characters at one time. It was also resolved, if the real identity of the Imam be traced, Maymun al-Qaddah was to come forward as Imam Muhammad bin Ismail to sacrifice his own life in order to protect the line of Imamate from extinction.

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Henceforward, Imam Muhammad bin Ismail had also a sobriquet of Maymun al-Qaddah to conceal his identity. Maymun al-Qaddah had a son, named Abdullah (d. 260/874), while Imam Muhammad bin Ismail had also a son at the same time, called Abdullah (d. 212/828), surnamed al-Wafi Ahmad. With the passage of time, Imam Muhammad became known as Maymun al-Qaddah in the places he resided, while Maymun al-Qaddah was treated as Imam Muhammad bin Ismail in the regions he propagated Ismailism. Abdullah, the son of Maymun al-Qaddah was consequently considered as the son of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail in the regions where the Imam had assumed the title of al-Qaddah. It therefore gave rise to the contrivance of a story that Abdullah (al-Wafi Ahmad) was the son of Maymun al-Qaddah on one hand, and Abdullah (bin Maymun al-Qaddah) was the son of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail on other. Later, it became a vehicle for the anti-Fatimid propagandists, notably Ibn Razzam to join the lineage of the Fatimid Imams with that of Abdullah bin Maymun al-Qaddah instead of Abdullah (al-Wafi Ahmad) bin Muhammad bin Ismail. This is known as Qaddahid theory and became a tool of the later Abbasids to discredit the Fatimid origin in 401/1010.

In the face of these facts, the Ismaili Imams had assumed the titles of the *da'is* in one or more time during the veiled period, which is also sounded expressly in the letter of the Fatimid Imam al-Muizz (d. 365/975), written in 354/965, addressing to his *da'i* Jaylam bin Shayban in Sind. This important letter is preserved by Idris Imaduddin (d. 872/1468) in the 5th volume of **Uyun'l-Akhbar**. Hatim bin Imran bin Zuhra (d. 498/1104) writes in his **al-Usul wa'l-Ahkam** that, "The *da'is* used their own names as nick-names for the Imams in order to protect them from persecution; some people were misled by this to such a degree that they said that the Imam, descendant of Muhammad bin Ismail was Abdullah bin Maymun al-Qaddah." According to Arif Tamir in **al-Qaramita** (p. 87), "When Muhammad bin Ismail fled from the east and established in Palmyra in Syria, the centers of his activities; he called himself Maymun al-Qaddah." Syed Abid Ali Abid writes in **Political Theory of the Shiites** (cf. **A History of Muslim Philosophy**, ed. by M.M. Sharif, Germany, 1963, 1:740) that, "As a matter of fact, as the latest research has established beyond any doubt, Maimun was the name adopted by Imam Muhammad when he went into concealment. In other words, during the period of concealment those who were in his confidence knew Imam Muhammad to be a Maimun." Husayn F. al-Hamdani (1901-1962) writes in his **On the Genealogy of Fatimid Caliphs** (Cairo, 1958, p. 18) that, "It is likely that Muhammad b. Ismail, who did not, and could not, according to accounts, live a settled life at one place, went underground during his wanderings by assuming the name of Maymun."

Before leaving Medina, Imam Muhammad had secretly convened an assembly of his *da'is*, inviting them from all the regions. When caliph Harun ar-Rashid came to know the secret assembly, he resolved to arrest the Imam in Medina. In the meantime, Zubeda, the wife of Harun ar-Rashid and a secret follower of the Imam, managed to send her trusted servant towards the Imam in Medina, informing him the plan of the caliph. Thus, the Imam had to make his footing out of Medina at once.

Tradition however has it that Imam Muhammad bin Ismail first went to southern Iraq, where he acquired the epithet of *al-maktum* (veiled one), and then at Nishapur in disguise, where he lodged for some times. Nishapur was one of the most important of the four great cities of Khorasan. Afterwards, he proceeded towards Ray.

Ishaq bin al-Abbas al-Farsi, the Abbasid governor of Ray secretly professed Ismailism. The Imam betrothed to Fatima, the daughter of Sarah, sister of Ishaq bin al-Abbas; who gave birth to a son,

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who was named Abdullah, also known as Wafi Ahmad. When the news of the Imam's stay at Ray reached the ears of Harun ar-Rashid, he wrote to Ishaq bin al-Abbas, ordering to arrest him and send him to Baghdad. Upon receipt of caliph's letter, he showed it to the Imam and replied to the caliph that he found no trace of Imam Muhammad bin Ismail, and would send as soon as he was arrested, and thus he tried to put the caliph off the scent. But the spies reported the caliph that Imam Muhammad bin Ismail not only was living at governor's house, but that he was operating his mission from there. Upon this, the caliph wrote another letter to Ishaq bin al-Abbas, impugning him to come in person with his forces if his orders were not obeyed forthwith. The governor however made his usual reply. Meanwhile, the complaints about Ali bin Musa bin Mahan, the governor of Khorasan reached the point where Harun ar-Rashid could no longer ignore them. With the intention of deposing his governor and to make a search of the Ismaili Imam, Harun ar-Rashid adopted a militant stance. In 189/805, he marched towards Ray with a detachment of his army, and after searching for the Imam through a tracking party, ordered the arrest and torture of Ishaq bin al-Abbas, who did not indicate any clue of the whereabouts of the Imam. Ishaq died as a result of severe torture that was inflicted upon him, and was rigorously flogged till death. He did not waver and stood firm in spite of excruciating tortures.

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Imam Muhammad bin Ismail selected Hurmuz as a chief *da'i* of the mission, and then made his footing at the fortified city of Nihawand, where he stayed with the governor, Mansur bin Jowshan, who had close ties with Ishaq bin al-Abbas. He allotted the Imam a piece of land in the district of Sarha, where he led a peaceful living. It is related that the Imam was traced out on one day in Sarha by the Abbasid agent, named Muhammad bin Ali al-Khorasani, who surprised the Imam in a mosque. He was greatly impressed to behold the Imam, and lost courage to arrest him, and permitted the Imam to escape. Thence, the Imam went to Azar in Khuzistan. He also proceeded to Shapur. Disguised as a merchant, he stayed in Shapur with a certain Qamas bin Nuh, whose daughter Rabta, he married.

When the Abbasids intensified their search, the Imam had to travel out of Iran. The tradition has it that Imam Muhammad bin Ismail had taken refuge at Farghana valley, situated mainly in the eastern Uzbekistan and partly in Tajikistan and Kyrgstan. The Ismailis in upper Oxus were reportedly deep-rooted in their faith, but unfortunately we do not have details of the Ismaili mission during the veiled era in Central Asia. These Ismailis however retained a specific literary tradition by preserving and transmitting from generation to generation an anonymous treatise, entitled **Ummu'l-Kitab** that had certainly exercised a sole source of their religious inspiration for about three hundred years till the arrival of Nasir Khusaro in this region.

After some times, the Imam returned to Salamia, where he died in 197/813. He left behind six sons, viz. Jafar, Ismail, Ahmad, Ali, Hussain and Abdullah. He had also a son named Yahya.

WAFI AHMAD (197-212/813-828), 8TH IMAM

Abdullah bin Muhammad, surnamed ar-Radi, Nasir or al-Wafi (true to one's word) was also known as ar-Radi Abdullah al-Wafi or Wafi Ahmad, was born in 149/766. The tradition relates that Imam Wafi Ahmad was locally known as *attar* (druggist) in Nishapur and Salamia, a surname he earned after his profession in drug and medicine as a protection against his real position. He was however represented by his *hujjat*, Abdullah bin Maymun (d. 260/874).

The Abbasid caliph Amin (d. 198/814) was murdered, thereupon, his foster brother, Mamun Rashid (d. 218/833) became the next caliph, who transferred his capital to Khorasan in early period of his rule, and as a result he followed a mild attitude with the Alids. After coming to Baghdad, Mamun Rashid changed his mind, and followed the doctrines of Mutazilite. He was however a bitterest foe of the Ismailis.

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With the death of Imam Ismail (d. 158/775) and Imam Muhammad (d. 197/813), the gravity of brutal persecutions of the Abbasids had considerably increased. The Abbasids left no chance to grind the Ismailis under the millstone of cruelty. The Ismaili Imams were impelled to thicken their hiding, therefore, the first *dawr-i satr* (period of concealment) came into force from 197/813 to 268/881, wherein the Imams were known as *al-A'immatu'l masturin* (the concealed Imams). Idris Imaduddin (d. 872/1468) writes in **Zahru'l-ma'ani** (p. 59) that, "He (Wafi Ahmad) was the first of the three concealed Imams by the order of God and His inspiration." Hamiduddin Kirmani (d. 412/1021) also admits in his **ar-Risalat al-Wai'za** (comp. 408/1017) that, "Muhammad bin Ismail became *qaim*, and after him, the concealed Imams (*aima'i masturin*) succeeded to the Imamate, who remained hidden on account of the persecution of the tyrants, and these were three Imams, viz., Abdullah, Ahmad and Hussain." Hatim bin Imran bin Zuhra (d. 498/1104) writes in **al-Usul wa'l Ahakam** that, "When Muhammad bin Ismail died, his authority passed to his son, Abdullah bin Muhammad, the hidden one, who was the first to hide himself from his contemporary adversaries." According to Hasan bin Nuh Broachi (d. 939/1533) in **Kitab al-Azhar** (comp. 931/1525) that, "The three hidden Imams were Abdullah bin Muhammad, Ahmad bin Abdullah, surnamed at-Taqi and Hussain bin Ahmad."

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Imam Wafi Ahmad settled in Nihawand, and betrothed to Amina, daughter of Hamdan, son of Mansur bin Jowshan, who was from Kazirun. By this wife, the Imam had a son, Ali bin Abdullah, surnamed al-Layth, and a daughter, Fatima.

Meanwhile, the Abbasids intensified their operations, thus Imam Wafi Ahmad made his son as the chief of the Ismaili mission, and himself went from the knowledge of the people, so that none of his followers and other knew where he was. It is however known from the fragment of the traditions that he had gone to Syria and lived in the castle of Masiyaf for some time.

The Ismaili *da'is* in search of a new residence for their Imam came to Salamia and inspected the town and approached the owner, Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Saleh, who had transformed the town into a flourishing commercial centre. The adherents and *da'is* began to rush privily to Salamia. Like in Nishapur, Imam Wafi Ahmad was also known locally as *attar* (druggist) in Salamia.

Imam Wafi Ahmad further on repaired to Daylam with his 32 trusted *da'is*, where he got married with an Alid lady in the village of Ashnash, and had a son by her, whom he named Ahmad, who later on became known as Taqi Muhammad. The adoption of strict *taqiya*, and moving from one to another place, forced the Imam to assign the mission works to his brother, Hussain bin Muhammad. He ordered his followers to obey his brother, saying: "One who obeys him, he obeys myself, and one who disobeys him, he disobeys me." Hussain bin Muhammad with a party, disguised as merchants, went on pilgrimage to Mecca. He then arrived in Ahwaz from Samarra. A certain *da'i* started preaching in favour of Hussain bin Muhammad, stating that Imam Wafi Ahmad appointed him instead of himself. When Hussain heard about this, he went to the place where the *da'i* resided, collected the concerned people, and declared that he was not the Imam, but a lieutenant of his brother, his servant and his slave. When the people heard this, their allegiance to the Imam increased.

Ali al-Layth, the elder son of the Imam had also converted a multitude of people. He was a generous and brave soldier, and fond of hunting and raised a small force of about two thousand men. Once he was on a hunting excursion with his friends in woods, where the Abbasids force raided them sent from Ray. He had a handful men with him, but fought valiantly until an arrow struck him in his throat and fell from his horse. He was arrested and beheaded and his head was sent to the Abbasid governor at Ray.

Hussain bin Muhammad was busy with his correspondence and the affairs of the community on other side. He was much frightened when the news about the murder of Ali al-Layth reached him. He decided to emigrate a safe place together with his associates. The Abbasids in the hills of Nihawand also ambushed them. Hussain bin Muhammad performed outstanding feats of bravery, and after a heroic resistance, he was killed with his associates and their families.

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Ali al-Layth had a son, called Ahmad bin Ali al-Layth, a learned and highly talented. When his father was killed, his nurse concealed him and saved from the enemies. He took refuge in the village called Mahdi kad-gah in Khuzistan. With him there were those of his relatives from among the sons of Hussain bin Muhammad. When he grew up, he resolved to take revenge of his father's murder from the people closely involved. Hence he gathered around him those of the Shi'ites, who were supporting him. Thus, he is said to have mustered four thousand men around him. He proceeded with them and pitched his tents at Shaliba, near Damawand, where he posed himself as an Abbasid commander. He summoned the local inhabitants, assuring them to read an official letter received from the government for his commandership. When the people came, he, with his Shi'ite supporters, slaughtered them all. It is recounted that they were the people who had killed his father and Hussain bin Muhammad. After taking revenge, Ahmad bin al-Layth repaired to Asak, a village in the district of Ramhurmuz in Khuzistan.

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It is most possible that Imam Wafi Ahmad lived in Suk al-Ahwaz for a short period. When he received news of the misfortunes that befell his brother and son, he left Ahwaz, which was so far an unscathed place for him.

Imam Wafi Ahmad next moved to Samarra with his son, Taqi Muhammad. Samarra lies on the east bank of the Tigris, half way between Takrit and Baghdad. It seems that Imam Wafi Ahmad found no proper respite at Samarra, he ultimately settled in Salamia, where he built a house and resided in the cloak of a local merchant. There lived many eminent Hashimites in Salamia. Most of them belonged to the posterity of Aqil bin Abu Talib, but some of whom were related to the Abbasids. So the Imam pretended to be one of these, and was regarded as one of the Hashimites.

The constant change of the Imam's abode made the Ismailis and *da'is* a complete loss of the trace of Imam Wafi Ahmad, making them to remain in great confusion. Hurmuz and his son Mahdi, Surhaf bin Rustam and his son Imran finally came forward to institute a search of the Imam. They collected four thousand *dinars* in cash from the donations of the faithful. They started on their journey, dispersing everywhere, each of them carrying with him a description of the appearance and characteristic features of the Imam. They travelled in guise of wandering hawkers, carrying with them on their donkeys different wares, such as pepper, aromatic plants, spindles, mirrors, frankincense and different kinds of millinery that find demand amongst women. Among themselves they agreed to meet on a fixed date at a certain place, selected in every province, different districts of which were allotted to every one of them to be toured. Whenever children and women came around them, they would ask whether there was in their locality a person, bearing such features. At length, they came to the district of Hims in Syria. They appointed a mosque of that town as their meeting place. So it happened that the Imam also was in the same district, namely in the hills of Jabal as-Summaq, in "the monastery of sparrows" (*dayr asfurin*), near Kafrabhum. As usual, they were shouting for the items for sale in the Jabal as-Summaq. Some women and children came out to them, and they, as usual, asked whether there was amongst them a man, having such and such physical features. To their utter surprise, a boy and a woman demanded from them as a price from their goods, promising to show them where the person answering their description could be found. They offered to them mastic, frankincense and other things. The woman and child told them that when just a short while ago they were passing near the monastery of sparrows, where they had seen the person with his pages. At length, they succeeded after hard searching for a year to find the Imam with great relief and jubilation.

Imam Wafi Ahmad is known to have summoned his most trusted *da'is*, called Abu Jafar and Abu Mansur at Salamia before his death, and said in presence of his son, Taqi Muhammad that: "I bequeath the office of Imamate to this my beloved son. He is your Imam from now onwards. You take an oath of allegiance from him, and must remain faithful with him in the manner you have been with me, and obey his orders." It is said that shortly before his death, Imam Wafi Ahmad retired into solitude and died in Salamia in the year 212/828. Imam Wafi Ahmad had two sons, Ahmad surnamed Taqi Muhammad and Ibrahim.

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TAQI MUHAMMAD (212-225/828-840), 9TH IMAM

Ahmad bin Abdullah, Muhammad al-Habib, or Abul Hussain, surnamed at-Taqi (God-fearing), also called Imam Taqi Muhammad, was born in 174/790 and ascended in 212/828. He lived secretly with his followers as a merchant at Salamia. He is also called *Sahib al-Rasail* (Lord of the epistles). He however retained the services of Abdullah bin Maymun (d. 260/874) as his *hujjat*.

W. Ivanow writes in **Ismailis and Qarmatians** (JBBRAS, Bombay, 1940, p. 73) that, "The second hidden Imam, the author of the Encyclopaedia of the Ikhwanu's Safa, or Sahib al-Rasail, as he is usually referred to in the Ismaili theological works, is also known definitely as Ahmad."

Imam Taqi Muhammad was known as an eminent Hashimite trader, making the people to flock at his residence. It suspected the Syrian governor, who communicated its report to caliph Mamun Rashid, who issued order to arrest Imam Taqi Muhammad, but the latter had quitted Salamia in advance for few years.

After the rise of the Abbasids, the Iranian who excelled the Arabs in learning and scholarship, became associated with their empire. In fact they were the intellectual cream of that society, greatly inclined towards philosophy, for which the Arabs had no taste. It was for this reason that during the Umayyad period in Damascus, known as the Arab national rule, the intellectual discipline like philosophy never acquired popularity. But during the Abbasid rule, because of the close association of the Iranians, the Greek philosophy acquired great currency. Thus in those days, it was the Muslim intellectuals who kept the torch of Greek philosophy burning. They realized that the old religious ideas must not be taken in their literal meaning, imparting that the mystical philosophy of esotericism owed its distinct origin to the words of Koran. The Mutazalites were in front to see Islamic teachings on the scale of philosophy. Baghdad became not only the metropolis, but also an important centre at that time. The function of philosophy is nothing more than speculating on the beings and considering them in so far as they lead to the knowledge of the Creator.

The Mutazalites came forward to apply the criterion of reason in presenting Islamic teachings. Tools of Greek philosophy and its terminologies were now being freely employed for explaining Islamic faith. Even the Asharites who were fanatically opposed to see Islam in the light of Greek philosophical aspects had to employ those very tools. Mysticism too, grew side by side with this trend. The mystics were influenced by Neo-Platonism. During the time of new philosophical approach, the orthodox circles had two options open before them; either to adopt a rigid stance, or to assimilate the trend. The orthodox orbits, however, tenaciously reacted against this pattern.

The Ismaili mission also opted the philosophical course, and provided an ideal climate for the new philosophical tendency with the ever living role of the Imams. The Ismaili *da'is* were well aware of the intellectual trend, who sincerely desired to creatively apply Neo-Platonism in the teachings of Islam. What is known as *tawil* in Ismaili jargon was nothing but the esoteric explanation of the exoteric teachings and practices of Islam. This assimilation attracted a number of eminent persons towards Ismailism. The Neo-Platonism readily found a congenial home for itself within the world of Shi'ism. It was for this principal cause that the orthodox theologians vehemently opposed the rational interpretation, and wrongly accused Ismailism of having suspended the operation of the Islamic Shariah. The Ismaili Imams however never allowed their followers to disregard the observance of the outward injunctions, but imparted the hidden meaning of the Koranic verses. They had nothing to do with political opportunism and remained away from its vortex and clung fast to their doctrines.

The statement of Ibn Hazm shows that the Mutazalites were a group of rationalists who judged all Islamic beliefs by theoretical reason and renounced those that related to all that lay beyond the reach of reason. They raised the problems of freewill and determinism, the attributes of God, the

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nature of the soul, the createdness of the Koran, etc. In sum, an endless chain of polemics was started by them in the Muslim society to such extent that Islam began to be assailed both from inside and outside. The situation was fraught with great danger for the faith. When the various forces arrayed themselves against the extremism of the rationalists, the orthodox *ulema* also reacted against them negatively.

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The Abbasid caliph Mamun (d. 218/833) also patronized philosophy and professed Mutazalism. It was trend among the educated elite to drift towards Greek philosophy and ultimately a bulk of the contradictions raised among the Muslims in interpreting Islamic practices. The intellect is an indispensable faculty in man, but despite this, its power of penetration has a definite limit. It may enjoy apparent supremacy and mastery in certain fields, but there are many things which are baffling and incomprehensible to it. The intellect cannot grasp a thing as a whole and its entirety. Its range of operation is limited, and therefore a true spiritual master is needed to guide a proper method. When the independent philosophical trend was perceived a threat to the Islamic *Shariah* from liberal sciences, a knot of earnest thinkers began to flock in a house in Basra at a fixed season to reconcile the philosophy and religion. They were the *Ikhwan* most probably an agency or organ of the Ismaili mission. They tried to evolve a new synthesis in order to save Islamic teachings from being swept away by the new flood of knowledge.

It is said that the members of the Ikhwan as-Safa formed a sort of Masonic Lodge, who lived in the Lower Mesopotamian river port of Basra; debating on literature, religion, philosophy and science. The association or club kept their proceedings concealed, and none were admitted. This secret association has left behind a standing monument of its achievements in an encyclopaedia, known as **Ikhwan as-Safa**, comprising of 52 epistles (*rasail*). The Epistles were distributed in various mosques of Baghdad. It played an important role by attempting a creative synthesis of Greek philosophy and the doctrines of Islam, giving a new dimension to the religion. It attracted the best intellectuals of its time and saved Islam from the heretical inroads that were preying upon it. It aimed to impart that if the *tawil* is carefully studied similarities with philosophical tools, the essence of the Islamic teachings can be easily discovered logically. It greatly impacted the rationalists and after 270/850, even the Mutazalites became more and more a small coterie of academic theologians cut off from the masses of the people and exercising no more influence on the further course of Islamic thought.

Prof. Masudul Hasan writes in **History of Islam** (Lahore, 1987, 1:486) that, "Al-Habib (Taqi Muhammad) had his headquarters at Salamiah near Hims in Syria, and from there he sent missionaries in all directions to propagate the Ismaili creed and enroll adherents."

Imam Taqi Muhammad is reported to have died in 225/840 in Salamia after bequeathing the office of Imamate to his son, Hussain surnamed, Radi Abdullah. His another son, Muhammad surnamed Sa'id al-Khayr, whose posterity were living in Salamia and killed at the hands of the Qarmatians in 290/902.

RADI ABDULLAH (225-268/840-881), 10TH IMAM

Hussain bin Ahmad or Abu Abdullah, surnamed az-Zaki, known as Hussain ar-Radi, or Radi Abdullah (Servant of God who is satisfied and content), was born in 210/825 and assumed the Imamate in 225/840. He is also called Muhammad and al-Muqtada al-Hadi. His also kept his identity secret being represented by his *hujjat*, Ahmad, surnamed al-Hakim. Tabari (3:2232) refers to his son, al-Mahdi under the name of Ibn al-Basri (the son of Basra), emphasizing the connection of Imam Radi Abdullah with southern Mesopotamia and the adjoining province of Khuzistan.

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Imam Radi Abdullah is celebrated in devoting time to complete the task of his father, his teachings and institutions. In his time, the faith of the Ismailis spread by leaps and bounds with galloping speed through out the length and breath of Arabia.

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Imam Radi Abdullah was an erudite scholar and is celebrated to have epitomized **Ikhwan as-Safa** into an instructive synopsis (*al-jamia*). Its full name was **ar-Risalat al-Jamia** (comprehensive epistle). It served as a substitute for the **Epistle of Ikhwan as-Safa,** intended for private circulation among the more advanced members of the groups. The **al-Jamia** is the backbone of the Epistles, which was further summarized in **Risalat al-Jamiat al-Jamia an al-Zubdah min Rasail Ikhwan as-Safa** (the condensation of the comprehensive epistles, or the cream of the epistles of Ikhwan as-Safa).

Ahmad bin Abdullah bin Maymun was born in 204/828 and had joined the Ismaili mission at youth. He operated his mission in Iran and Iraq. His father had sent him with a deputation to make a survey in Yamen, where he collected the informations for the headquarters and also travelled as far as Bahrain. After his father's death in 260/874, he returned to Salamia, where Imam Radi Abdullah promoted him to the rank of *hujjat*. He was known in Salamia as Ahmad al-Hakim, and died in 275/888.

Imam Radi Abdullah had dispatched his *da'is* in all directions, the most acclaimed among them was Ibn Hawshab. When the Imam found that Ibn Hawshab was firmly grounded in Ismaili faith and groomed enough for its promulgation, he entrusted him and his colleague, Ibn Fazal, with the task of Ismaili mission in Yamen. They reached Yamen, and conquered Sana'a, the capital of Yamen, and exiled the ruling tribe of Banu Laydir, and established Ismaili authority in Yamen. The Ismaili mission reached the apex of its influence in Yamen, from where Ibn Hawshab dispatched many *da'is* to the farthest corners. Thus, Yamen became a vital zone and an important hub of Ismaili mission.

Abu Abdullah al-Shi'i was hailed from Kufa, where he had been an inspector of weights and measures, and was also an ascetic of Shi'ite inclinations, having been converted along with his brother, Abul Abbas bin Ahmad to Ismailism by *da'i* Firuz. Realizing his potential, Imam Radi Abdullah sent him to Ibn Hawshab in Yamen for further training in Ismaili esoteric doctrines as well as affairs of the state. Abu Abdullah stayed in Yamen with Ibn Hawshab for a year.

Imam Radi Abdullah continued his peaceful living in Salamia, associating the local Hashimites. He also kept on good terms with the local governor. He seems to have been active in scholarly matters without a bearing in the politics. He was rolling in plenty; yet he contented himself with plain dress and simple food. He was humble in disposition and very hospitable. He is said to have granted allowances from his wealth to the poor and disabled persons in Salamia without discrimination between the Ismailis and non-Ismailis. Tradition has it that he was fond of horsing, shooting, hunting and archery, which had been also a favourite pastime of the Hashimites in Syria.

When Imam Radi Abdullah felt that the shadows of his death were closing upon him, he consigned the office of Imamate to his son, Muhammad al-Mahdi, saying, according to Ibn Khaldun that: "You are the promised Mahdi. You would take refuge in a remote land after my death, where you would have to submit to hard trials." (**Tarikh**, Karachi, 1966, 5:93).

Imam Radi Abdullah died in 268/881 at Salamia while he was travelling in the vicinity, appointing before his death as his trustee his own brother, Muhammad bin Ahmad, surnamed Sa'id al-Khayr as the guardian of his son, al-Mahdi. His death in 268/881 marked the termination of *dawr-i satr* (concealment period) in the Ismaili history.

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MUHAMMAD AL-MAHDI (268-322/881-934), 11TH IMAM

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Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi was born on Monday, the 12th Shawal, 260/July 31, 873 in the town, called Askar-i Mukram (or Askar wa Makrum), situated between the rivers of Masrukan and Shushtar. His name was Abdullah al-Mahdi and assumed the Imamate at the age of 8 years. His father, Imam Radi Abdullah had assigned the control of organization to his uncle, Sa'id al-Khayr. By the time Imam al-Mahdi became young, and married a daughter of his uncle, who died after some time.

The Ismaili mission had its roots since the era of Imam Jafar Sadik. As early as the year 145/762, the two *da'is*, called Halwani and Abu Sufiani had been dispatched to the Maghrib. They settled among the Berbers in the land of Katama and summoned the local populace to the cause of Ahl al-Bayt, and converted a bulk of people. Abu Sufiani died a few years later, but Halwani lived for a long time. Knowing the death of Halwani and Abu Sufiani, Ibn Athir (d. 630/1234) writes in **Kamil fi't Tarikh** (Beirut, 1975, 8:31) that Ibn Hawshab told to Abu Abdullah: "Our missionaries have thoroughly ploughed the land of Maghrib, making it arable. None is capable except you after them. You prepare yourself now for Maghrib." Abu Abdullah set out from Yamen in 279/892, and arrived in Mecca during pilgrimage, where he contacted the Katama pilgrims of Maghrib at Mina, and impressed them with his vast knowledge about the merits of Ahl al-Bayt. The pilgrims were gladdened to know that Abu Abdullah was heading towards Egypt, which was on their route to the Maghrib. While travelling with them, Abu Abdullah inquired at great length about their country in order to judge the suitability of his mission. He, thus gained the admiration of his fellow-travellers. After a short stay in Egypt, he reached Maghrib in the Katama homeland on 14th Rabi I, 280/June 3, 893.

On the other hand, Imam al-Mahdi left Salamia in 286/899. He relinquished his house at the time of the evening prayer, unnoticed by any one and travelled the whole night escorted by an Arab and thirty other horsemen. He made his junction in Egypt, where he met *da'i* Abu Ali al-Hussain bin Ahmad bin Daud bin Muhammad (d. 321/932). In Egypt, Imam al-Mahdi abandoned the likely choice to go to Yamen as expected by his entourage. This turned out to be a very wise decision, since in Yamen he would have risked the Abbasid confrontation and the menace of the rebellious Qarmatians. On the eve of his departure from Egypt, Imam al-Mahdi revealed his intention of going to Maghrib, and few persons who accompanied him had registered disappointment, notably *da'i* Firuz.

While the caravan of the Imam was stirring between Egypt and Tahuna, they were attacked by the Berbers, who looted the caravan and took away some baggages of Imam's books belonging to the Koran, interpretations, history etc. It grieved Imam al-Mahdi much more than other things. The caravan of the Imam went to Tripoli, whose governor made an unsuccessful attempt to arrest him. The Imam thus divided his caravan into two groups. He sent forward Abul Abbas towards the Katama tribe to gauge the situation as well as to make an advance tidings of his arrival. Abul Abbas reached Kairwan when the Aghlabid ruler, Ibrahim bin Ahmad had died in 291/903 and was succeeded by Zaidatullah. Abul Abbas was not able to escape suspicion, and was arrested.

Imam al-Mahdi went to Kastilla province after knowing the arrest of Abul Abbas and made a junction for few days at Tuzar. When he made sure that there was no possibility of Abul Abbas getting free, he changed his route and went as a merchant to Sijilmasa, the capital of the Midrarite Berber, and stayed in a house hired from a certain Abul Habsha. In Sijilmasa, Imam al-Mahdi procured his friendship with the governor, al-Yasa bin Midrar (883-910). When the governor received a letter of Ziadatullah, he put the Imam under house arrest in his sister's residence.

Abu Abdullah, on the other hand, conquered almost whole Maghrib within 16 years in 296/909 and routed the Aghlabid rule of 112 years. He decisively subdued the Aghlabids near Laribus, and established supremacy over the Aghlabid empire and got an end of the Abbasid suzerainty over it in Maghrib. Six days later he entered the Aghlabid capital, Raqada which was about six miles south of Kairwan on 1st Rajab, 296/March 26, 909 and relieved Abul Abbas in Tripoli. After

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setting a new fabric of administration, Abu Abdullah marched to Sijilmasa with a large army. The situation at Sijilmasa was rather tricky, since Imam al-Mahdi had been imprisoned there and his any wrong move might endanger the life of Imam. Thus, he sent a peace mission to the governor, asking to release the Imam. The governor killed the messenger, therefore, Abu Abdullah had no choice but to engage in warfare. However, after a brief battle, the governor fled and his army dispersed. Abu Abdullah then triumphantly entered Sijilmasa and liberated Imam al-Mahdi, his son, entourages and pages. Abu Abdullah saw his Imam for the first time. As soon as Imam al-Mahdi made his appearance, Ibn al-Muttalibi said to Abu Abdullah that, "Lo, this is my master and yours and the master of all the people." There was immense rejoicing amongst the troops while beholding Imam al-Mahdi. The faithful followers crowded around the horses of the Imam and his son, al-Qaim and Abu Abdullah walked in front. Abu Abdullah dismounted, and so did Ibn al-Muttalibi and the troops. According to **Iftitahu'd-Dawa** (p. 245), Abu Abdullah was overjoyed and said to the people: "This is the Lord, mine and thine, and your Wali al-Amr, your Imam-i Zaman and your Mahdi, on whose behalf I preached you. God has fulfilled His promise about him, and assisted his supporters and troops. He is your Ulul Amr." Imam al-Mahdi remained for 40 days in Sijilmasa to restore peace and finally, he embarked for Raqada via Ikjan with his son and their whole entourage, along with Abu Abdullah and his companions.

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Imam al-Mahdi rode into Raqada in triumph wearing dark silk clothes with a matching turban. Riding behind him, his son wore a similar ensemble in orange silk. Abu Abdullah wore mulberry-coloured clothes, a linen tunic, a turban and a scarf. The caravan arrived in Raqada on 20th Rabi II, 297/January 6, 910 and laid the foundation of the Fatimid Caliphate. All the notables, both Arabs and non-Arabs without exception and many other people came out to receive him. He took oath of allegiance from them. He assumed power and ordered his name mentioned in the *khutba* and inscribed on coins. He began to develop the barren land of Maghrib. He imposed the Islamic laws, enforcing strictly in the prohibition of forbidden food and drink, and punishing severely those who tried to practice freedom in it.

During the first few months of his rule, Imam al-Mahdi began to consolidate all powers to himself and made drastic changes, especially the financial cells. Previously, Abu Abdullah reserved the gains for the Katama soldiers, but the Imam stripped the fortunes they had gained in the battles. Abul Abbas, the brother of Abu Abdullah, however did not acquiesce but began to criticize Imam al-Mahdi's actions and even did not like the whole power in the hands of the Imam. Qadi Noman states that when Abul Abbas had been made a deputy leader at Raqada,- he had acquired a taste for power and was therefore resentful of being compelled to surrender his authority to Imam al-Mahdi and to be merely his subordinate. He exploited the discontent of the Katama chiefs who were losing power under the new administration of the Imam. He also began to instigate his brother, Abu Abdullah and eventually convinced him to some extent.

It is related that once Abu Abdullah dared to suggest Imam al-Mahdi to sit aside with all honours, while he would run the affairs of his state, for he had known the people, how they should be treated. This gesture warned the Imam of the change that had taken place in Abu Abdullah's character. When Abu Abdullah wavered in his absolute loyalty, the Imam did not waste much time in eliminating him. Imam al-Mahdi had his spies planted where both brothers met, and ultimately, both of them were killed on 15th Jamada II, 298/February 18, 911. The Imam offered the funeral service of Abu Abdullah to glorify his outstanding services and said: "Abu Abdullah was caught in delusion. The real traitor was Abul Abbas."

The executions of Abu Abdullah and Abul Abbas were soon followed by a riot of the Katama tribe, which took place the funeral. Imam al-Mahdi was not at all frightened and mounted his horse, boldly rode out among the excited crowds and with that personal courage and valour characterized him, told to the rioters, "O'people, you know the status of Abu Abdullah and Abul Abbas in Islam, but satan misguided them, resulting them being deserved for killing. I give you all the security of lives." After hearing this, the people dispersed (**Iftitahu'd-Dawa,** p. 267).

Imam al-Mahdi had to deal with the Berber tribes who were enraged by the death of Abu Abdullah. He also invaded Morocco in 309/921 and got an end of the Idrisid dynasty. He also

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captured Sicly and extended his rule throughout North Africa. The Byzantines however continued to retain the occupation of Calabria in southern Italy. Sicily was thickly populated by Lombards, Greeks, Arabs and Berbers. The first reported Fatimid governor of Sicily was Ibn Abil Fawaris. Soon afterwards in 297/910, he was replaced by Hasan bin Ahmad, also known as Ibn Abi Khinzir. He raided the southern Italian coasts in 298/911 and also in the following year against the pirates and brought rich booty. In 299/912, the Arabs and the Berbers rebelled against him in Palermo and Girgenti due to his severity. It was Imam al-Mahdi to have suppressed the uprisings diplomatically and appointed Ali bin Umar al-Balawi. The Sicilians opposed the new appointment and chose Ibn Qurhub as their own governor. Ibn Qurhub was against the Fatimids and declared his support to the Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadir (295-320/908-932). Later, the Berbers of Girgenti, joined by the inhabitants of other parts of Sicily, revolted against Ibn Qurhub, who was taken prisoner and sent to Imam al-Mahdi, who had him executed. After this short interval of political cataclysm, Sicily again reverted to the Fatimid domain, though the political troubles continued to erupt on the island. The early Fatimid used Sicily as a base for launching raids against the coastal towns of Italy and France, including the islands of the western Mediterranean; and also continued to be engaged in war and diplomacy with the Byzantines.

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The first reported raid against the south of Italian peninsula took place in 306/918. The Fatimid troops captured Reggio. The second incursion was launched from Mahdiya in the summer of 310/922. With a fleet of 20 galleys, the Fatimid officer Masud bin Ghalib al-Wusuli took possession of the fortress of St. Agatha. Two years later, Jafar bin Ubaid, known as Suluk, led the third expedition, with Palermo as his starting point. He captured Bruzzano and Oria and returned to Mahdiya with vast riches. The resounding success of this campaign had the effect of inducing the Byzantines to conclude a treaty with the Fatimids. But the annual tribute agreed for Calabria was slow to reach Mahdiya and hostilities resumed in 315/927. Continuing until 318/930 under the command of Sabir, the Fatimid incursions proceeded victoriously against Tarento, Salerno, Naples and Termoli. Eventually the tribute was paid and the treaty resumed in force until the death of Imam al-Mahdi. According to **The Encyclopaedia of Islam** (Leiden, 1986, 5:1244), "Byzantium allowed the Fatimid sovereign to subjugate Apulia and Calabria and to reinforce the supremacy of Islam in Sicily."

The period under our review is noted for the Ismaili *da'is* to have launched a brisk and pervasive mission in Egypt, where most of the officials and nobles had espoused Ismailism and entered into correspondence with Imam al-Mahdi in Maghrib. Hence, Egypt offered an easier prey and to invade it was indubitably a less perilous enterprise. In 301/913, a powerful force commanded by his son, al-Qaim had been dispatched by land, and a fleet of 200 ships under Hubasa bin Yousuf against Alexandria. The Egyptian governor could not resist and acquired reinforcement from the Abbasids. Initially, the course of the expedition proceeded in al-Qaim's favour, but after capturing Alexandria, he failed before Fustat, and not being capable confronting the Egyptian army reinforced from Baghdad under the command of Munis, he retracted his steps towards Maghrib.

In 307/919, Imam al-Mahdi returned to the attack with a second expedition commanded again by his son. This move at first progressed favourably as the preceding with the capture of Alexandria and the occupation of Fayyum. But when the Fatimid fleet encountered disaster at Rosetta due to the shortage of supplies, and the battles before Fustat turned to the advantage of the troops of Munis, al-Qaim was forced for the second time to retreat and returned to Maghrib. This time the Abbasid ships were manned by experienced Greek mariners. In sum, both invasions procured no result, but Barqa remained however in Fatimid's occupation. Imam al-Mahdi seems to have organized, shortly before his death, a third expedition against Egypt. In fact, this third attempt took place in 323/935 at the beginning of the reign of his successor, al-Qaim.

In 301/914, Imam al-Mahdi founded a new city on the coast near Kairwan and gave to it the name of al-Mahdiya that served as the Fatimid capital for some generations. The site selected on the Gulf of Gabes, between Susa and Sfax on a small peninsula with a narrow neck just into the sea for nearly a mile in length and less than 500 yards in breath, which terminates the cape of Africa. The landscape of the new city was like a hand stretching out onto the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. There were only two entrances of castles, mosques, fortresses and warehouses and the

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fortification along the shore consisted of a thick wall barrier. The reflection of light and the imagery of waves on the rocks are unimaginable. There were 16 towers of which 8 belonged to the original foundation and another 8 were added in a later period. The official inauguration of the new capital was pushed forward to 8th Shawal, 308/February 20, 921.

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Imam al-Mahdi also built an impressive shipyard, which soon enabled the Fatimids to create a powerful fleet. The Fatimid set up ship-building factory, and yards were opened in Tunis. In 303/915, a big dock was constructed by digging out a hill on the coast of the Mediterranean, making a surface area of about 8250 square meters, so that 200 battle ships might be kept in reserve there. These ships were called *shini* and were so big that one of them required 143 oars to move it. It had a gate and a lock that could be closed.

To maintain the stability of the empire, connecting with different parts by sea-routes, the Fatimid gave due attention in the nautical progress. Yaqut (d. 626/1229) writes in **Mu'ajam al-Buldan** (comp. 625/1228) that, "The most renowned port of Maghrib was Mahdiya. Its dock was cut out of solid rock. It was a capacious dock, and could harbour thirty ships at once. On both sides of the port there lay big chains, which were opened when a ship came in." Makrizi (1363-1442) writes in his **al-Khitat** (3:320) that the Fatimids were the first to start mock fights at sea in the world. The Fatimid admirals also developed the techniques of attacking ships with fire-throwers, which the English employed five centuries later when they routed the Spanish Armada.

The Ismaili mission was carried on in Khorasan around the last decade of the 3rd century/903-913 by Abu Abdullah al-Khadim, who stayed in Nishapur as the first chief *da'i* of Khorasan. He was executed during the governorship of Abu Bakr bin Muhtaj (321-327/933-939), and was succeeded around 307/919 by Abu Sa'id al-Sha'rani, who was sent by Imam al-Mahdi from Maghrib. He was followed by Hussain bin Ali al-Marwazi, who transferred his seat from Nishapur to Marw al-Rudh. Al-Marwazi is reputed in the annals of the Samanid dynasty, and during the rule of Ahmad bin Ismail (295-301/907-914), he commanded the Samanid forces in Sijistan in 298/910. In 300/913, al-Marwazi led the Samanid forces in Sijistan for the second time, and returned to Bukhara in the same year. Abu Zaid Balkhi (235-322/850-934) compiled his **Suwar al-Aqalim** in 308/920, and makes mention of Hussain bin Ali al-Marwazi and his brother Muhammed Suluk, when the author visited his birthplace, Balkh in 301/914. Abu Zaid Balkhi also writes his close relation with al-Marwazi and the regular material assistance he acquired from him.

It is said that al-Marwazi hoped to be appointed governor of Sijistan due to his valuable services, but was disappointed. After the death of Ahmad bin Ismail and the accession of Nasr bin Ahmad in 301/914, al-Marwazi paid his allegiance to Mansur bin Ishaq, the cousin of Ahmad bin Ismail in Herat. Al-Marwazi extended his influence in Nishapur, but soon he had to return to Herat, and subsequently he again went to Nishapur and captured it. The Samanid commander, Ahmad bin Sahl (306-307/918-919) was sent against him, who took Herat and gave battle to al-Marwazi before Marw al-Rudh in 306/918. This time al-Marwazi was defeated due to shortage of supplies, and was taken prisoner to Bukhara, where he was imprisoned. He was released with the intervention of *vizir* al-Jayhani. After being pardoned and spending some time at Samanid court, he returned to Khorasan to organize the mission works, where he spent rest of his life.

Yamen was a vital zone of the Fatimid mission under the able headship of Ibn Hawshab. In 291/904, however, his close associate, Ali bin Fazal al-Jadani had shown signs of disloyalty, and in 299/911, he publicly renounced his allegiance to Imam al-Mahdi. It must be noted that in Egypt, when Imam al-Mahdi decided to go to Maghrib instead of Yamen, *da'i* Firuz also gave up Ismaili faith and fled to Yamen, and instigated a revolt. He won the support of Ali bin Fazal. Subsequently, Firuz was killed and Ali bin Fazal endeavoured unsuccessfully to coerce the collaboration of Ibn Hawshab. The death of Ibn Hawshab took place in 303/914, and had made a will to his son Abul Hasan Mansur and his pupil Abdullah bin Abbas al-Shawiri to administer the mission in Yamen till an official appointment of a new chief *da'i* by Imam al-Mahdi. Upon his death, al-Shawiri had sent a letter to Imam al-Mahdi, reporting the death of Ibn Hawshab, and requesting for any chief *da'i* instead. In a reply, the Imam confirmed the post of al-Shawiri as a

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chief *da'i*. Jafar, the son of Ibn Hawshab was alone among his brothers to demonstrate his loyalty to the Fatimids, but his elder brother, Abul Hasan Mansur, who was expecting to succeed his father, had defected from the mission, and returned to his castles in Miswar, where he was joined by his brothers. Jafar, noticing the inimical intentions of his brothers towards al-Shawiri, tried to persuade that a quarrel would only lead to impair the Ismaili influence in Yamen. In spite of this warning, Abul Hasan Mansur waited for his opportunity, and killed al-Shawiri and took the dominions. Jafar immediately went to Maghrib, where he reached when Imam al-Mahdi had expired in 322/934. Imam al-Qaim charged him the mission work in Maghrib, where he also served Imam al-Mansur and Imam al-Muizz, and was commonly known as Jafar bin Mansur al-Yamen.

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Having laid a firm foundation for Fatimid rule in Maghrib, extending from Morocco to the borders of Egypt, Imam al-Mahdi died on 15th Rabi I, 322/February 22, 934 at the age of 61 years, 5 months and 3 days. F. Dachraoui writes in his article in **Encyclopaedia of Islam** (1985, 5:1244) that, "Mahdi had the skill and energy to conduct moderate but firm policies within his provinces, and to wage tireless warfare beyond his frontiers to affirm the right of the descendants of Fatima to lead the Muslim world. Thus, under his rule, the Fatimid empire embarked successfully on the first phase of its long history."

QAIM (322-334/934-946), 12TH IMAM

He was born in 280/893 in Salamia. His name was Muhammad Nizar, surnamed *al-Qaim bi-Amrillah* (Firm in the ordinances of God). He married to Umm Habiba, the daughter of his uncle, and ascended in 322/934.

In 301/913, Imam al-Qaim had commanded the Fatimid naval forces. The Fatimid fleet sailed from Mahdiya towards the northern coast of Egypt and returned to Raqada after conquering Tripoli. In the following year Hubasa bin Yousuf set off east and conquered Surt and Ajabiyya, and on 7th Rajab, 301, February 6, 914 he entered Barqa. On Thursday the 14th Zilhaja, 301/July 7, 914, the Imam followed him from Raqada with a large army. Contrary to his orders, Hubasa, without waiting for his arrival, pushed further east and invaded Alexandria on 2nd Safar, 302/August 27, 914. Imam al-Qaim arrived there on Friday the 14th Rabi II, 302/November 4, 914. The Abbasids succeeded to prevent the Fatimid's entry in Egypt. At his withdrawal from Egypt, Imam al-Qaim however left a garrison in Barqa.

In 307/919, the second attempt had been conducted at the command of Imam al-Qaim. He set out eastward on Monday the 1st Zilkada, 306/April 5, 919. On Friday the 8th Safar, 307/July 9, 919 the vanguard of the army arrived in Alexandria. This time the Fatimid forces made an advance right upto the Egyptian capital before they were repulsed. These two invasions were launched during the period of Imam al-Mahdi. After his succession, Imam al-Qaim made a third attempt in 323/935 under the command of Raydan. Muhammad bin Tughj al-Ikhshidid (323-334/935-946), the then governor of Egypt, repelled this attack, forcing the Fatimid forces to withdraw to Barqa. Nothing was gained in these three campaigns, but it made a way open for the next period to the Fatimid to occupy Egypt.

In 323/935, the Italian pirates raided the coastal regions of the Fatimid, therefore, Imam al-Qaim turned his attention towards Europe, and dispatched a strong squadron of 20 sailing vessels under the command of *Amir al-Bahr* (the European, *Admiral*) Yaqub bin Ishaq al-Tamimi, who made a successful attack on Italy, the south of France, and the coast of Genoa and Calabria, and a part of Lombardy was also brought into subjection. During the Italian raids, the Fatimid forces used mangonels (*arradas* or *dabbabas*), an engine missiling the heavy stones on target, which was the then most advanced weapon. Maurice Lombard writes in **The Golden Age of Islam** (Netherlands, 1975, p. 86) that, "Fatimid currency was in use throughout southern Italy. *Dinars*

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and particularly quarter *dinars* (*rub*) were in circulation and were initiated (*tarin*), a phenomenon similar to that observed in the Christian kingdoms in northern Spain and the country of Barcelona which, in the eleventh century, initiated the Muslim gold currencies in use in the south of the peninsula."

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The Fatimid fleet was unfortunately called back, according to **Islam in Africa** (Lahore, 1964, p. 87) by Prof. Mahmud Brelvi, "just at the moment when Qaim's navy was about to conquer the whole Italy". It was due to the domestic rebellion of Abu Yazid. Syed Zakir Hussain writes in **Tarikh-i Islam** (Delhi, 1935) that, "If Abu Yazid had not staged a massive revolt against the Fatimids, al-Qaim would have probably conquered the whole Europe, resulting a loss of a great Islamic victory." R. Brunschvig also admitted the loss of Europe in the campaign, vide **Encyclopaedia of Islam** (1934. 4:850). The Fatimid fleet, returning to Mahdiya, also occupied islands of Sardinia, Corsica, Malta, Crete and Cyprus for a short while. And here we cannot but call attention to a fact that the Fatimids were the masters of the entire Mediterranean, and their fleets operated freely throughout its length and breadth. Prof. Mahmud Brelvi writes in **Islam in Africa** (Lahore, 1964, pp. 86-87) that, "Qaim was a great warrior, and was the first of the Fatimid Caliphs who created a powerful fleet in the Mediterranean. After re-establishing his authority in Mauritania, he turned his attention towards the continent of Europe. His ports had been harassed by the Italian pirates from the Ligurian coast, from Pisa and other places. In reprisal, Qaim overran Southern Italy as far as Gaeta, and his ships of war captured Genoa. A part of Lombardy was also brought into subjection. Unfortunately, the pent-up wrath of the people at the excesses of the savage Berbers, the allies of the Fatimids, burst into a furious flame just at the moment when Qaim's navy was about to conquer the whole Italy. The revolt was headed by a Khariji, named Abu Yazid."

Imam al-Qaim had to meet more serious rebellions hatching in the west. The principle revolt took place amongst the Zanata tribe, south of Katama territory, who were the Kharijis under the leadership of Abu Yazid. In 332/943, he marched northwards and took Baghai, Tabassa, Mermajenna and Laribus. The Fatimid forces tried to prevent his advance upon Baja, but were repulsed. Abu Yazid marched towards Kairwan, but this time he suffered defeat. He soon rallied, and took Raqada, and then pressed on to Kairwan and captured it. Mahdiya put up a vigorous resistance for almost a year, repelling Abu Yazid's repeated attempts to storm the capital. Ziri bin Manad, the *amir* of the tribe of the Sanhaja sent a new reinforcement to the Fatimids, who was a fervent Ismaili.

In 334/945, Abu Yazid ordered for massacre and plunder, and captured Tunisia. The Fatimid forces were able to regain whole Tunisia next year. But, after an interval, Abu Yazid rallied and laid siege to the town of Susa.

Imam al-Qaim was an experienced soldier and an able commander who could lead his forces to victory. Unlike his father, he used to participate in military expeditions. He was bold and courageous, and his activities were not confined to his military operations only. Prof. Masudul Hasan writes in **History of Islam** (Lahore, 1987, 1:492) that, "Al-Qaim ruled for eleven years. He was a man of courage, and did not lose nerves even in the face of great difficulty. He lost most of his territory to Abu Yazid, and was besieged in his capital Mahdiya. In spite of a very difficult situation, he preserved, and out of the civil war which lasted for several years, the Fatimids ultimately emerged victorious. This civil war changed the course of history. But for this civil war, al-Qaim would have occupied a greater part of Italy, and that would have served a base for the conquest of Europe."

Imam al-Qaim died on 14th Shawal, 334/May 19, 946 at the height of Abu Yazid's rebellion, who at that time had siege over Susa. His age was 59 years, 6 months and 27 days and the period of the Imamate and Caliphate lasted for 12 years, 6 months and 27 days.

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MANSUR (334-341/946-952), 13TH IMAM

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He was born in 302/914 in Kairwan, the first Fatimid Imam to be born in Maghrib. His name was Ismail and *kunya* was Abu Tahir, surnamed *al-Mansur bi-Amrillah* (Victorious by the command of God). He acceded the throne on 334/945 during the time when Abu Yazid had laid a siege over Susa.

Abu Yazid Khariji traced his tribal origin to the clan of Ifran. He had a leaning towards the doctrines of the Kharijis, which he learnt from Abu Ammar al-A'ma. Abu Yazid had been elected then the leader of the Kharijis, and intended to acquire political power. He started his anti-Fatimid agitation in 316/928 in Qastila and soon procured a large following. With the Berbers moving quickly to his side, Abu Yazid engineered his revolt in 332/944, and swiftly conquered almost all the southern regions, and seized Kairwan in 333/944. He laid a siege over Susa when Imam al-Mansur ascended. Ibn Khallikan writes in **Wafayat al-A'yan** (1:219) that, "Al-Mansur was charged by his father (al-Qaim) to wage war against Abu Yazid, who had revolted against his authority. Abu Yazid Makhlad bin Kaidad belonged to the sect of Ibadites; he made an outward show of rigid devotion, but was in reality an enemy of God; he never rode but on an ass, nor wore any dress but woolen."

The first task of Imam al-Mansur was to relieve Susa. He himself commanded the forces and inflicted a severe defeat on Abu Yazid, and drove him back to Kairwan, then he went to Sabta, and reached Kairwan and helped the suffered people. The Imam was warmly received in Kairwan, and he also personally conducted a close chase, defeating Abu Yazid near Tubna and then around Masila. In 336/947, Imam al-Mansur inflicted a final defeat on the Khariji Berbers in the mountains of Kiyana, where the rebels had entrenched themselves in a fortress, called Qalat Bani Hammad.

Abu Yazid was suppressed and taken prisoner, but was died of his wounds. Jafar bin Mansur (d. 365/975) is the contemporary authority, who had also composed few poems about the revolt of Abu Yazid and the marvelous actions of Imam al-Mansur. Ibn Athir (7:171) tells us that, "Al-Mansur personally took charge of the military operations and put an end to Abu Yazid's menace. Had al-Mansur failed in checking this menace, it is probable that the Fatimid empire would not have survived long. With all this, al-Mansur treated generously with his implacable foe. He came to Kairwan in 334/945 and gave protection to the family of Abu Yazid who had despaired of life. He even granted his wives and children monthly allowances. He also granted Abu Yazid's request to restore his wives and children to him on condition that he would not wage war. But Abu Yazid soon broke his promise and tried to launch another insurrection." Fazal, the son of Abu Yazid continued the revolt in the Awras for a few months until he, too, was subdued and was brought to Mahdiya by Batit bin Ya'la bin Batit in 336/948. Other sons of Abu Yazid fled to Spain and took refuge under the Umayyads. The rebellion of Abu Yazid, however, had sucked away the resources of the state, forcing the Fatimids to pay a heavy price.

When Imam al-Mansur was subduing Abu Yazid's revolt, a report reached to him about a petty uprising of Hamid Bazaltain, the chief of the Maghrib, who had laid a siege over Tahrat soon after announcing his loyalty with the Umayyads of Spain. After crushing the revolt of Abu Yazid, the Imam focused his attention at the new rising, and himself commanded his army. He inflicted a defeat to Hamid and appointed Yala bin Muhammad, the chief of Banu Ifran in Maghrib.

Imam al-Mansur was unable to pay attention towards Sicily during the revolt of Abu Yazid, where Ibn Ataf proved an inefficient governor. Taking advantage of his weakness, the Byzantines stopped the payment of the tribute to the Fatimids. In the meantime, the inhabitants of Sicily also rose against Ibn Ataf, who hid himself in the old castle of Palermo.

Confronted by the chaotic situation caused by the rebellious at Palermo and Agrigento in Sicily against the Fatimid *amirs*, Imam al-Mansur deemed it logical and sensible to entrust Sicily's administration to those whose fidelity was proven beyond doubt, and who, moreover, could

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maintain a neutral stand, therefore, Imam al-Mansur appointed Hasan bin Ali al-Kalbi as a new governor of Sicily in 336/946.

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Hasan bin Ali al-Kalbi belonged to an influential Kalbid family, stemming from the tribe of Kalab bin Wabara of Banu Abil Hussain. Under the Aghlabids rule, the Kalabid family began to decline from public notice, but they became the main prop and stay during the Fatimids period, and swiftly found a milieu favourable to their rise, and became a governing element of Muslim Sicily by the middle of the 4th/10th century. Ali bin Ali al-Kalbi, one of the first dynasts of the family and son-in-law of Salim bin Abi Rashid, the then Fatimid governor of Sicily, from 305/917 to 325/936, died at the siege of Agrigento in 326/938. His son Hasan bin Ali al-Kalbi, who had distinguished himself in the campaigns waged by Imam al-Qaim and Imam al-Mansur against Abu Yazid, was the first of a succession of Kalbid governors in Sicily, a kind of hereditary emirate under the Fatimids which lasted until the middle of 5th/11th century.

In Sicily, Hasan bin Ali al-Kalbi finished the internal uprisings and restored peace. He also solidified his army, forcing the Byzantine emperor to resume the payment of the tribute. On Imam al-Mansur's death in 341/952, Hasan bin Ali returned to Mansuria, leaving behind the government of the island in the hands of his son, Ahmad bin Hasan (342-358/953-969), the second Kalbid governor of Sicily.

The new Fatimid policy led to the origination of the semi-independent dynasty of the Kalbids, which ruled over Sicily for almost a century on behalf of the Fatimids, having considerable autonomy. Hasan, called al-Samsan (431-445/1040-1053) was the last Kalbid governor of Sicily. The Norman Count Roger captured Messina in 1060, and Palermo, the capital of the island fell to them in 1072. The Normans also occupied Syracuse in 1085 and by 1091 the whole of the island came to the possession of the Normans. That was the end of the Muslim rule in Sicily.

In 340/951, Imam al-Mansur was reported that the emperor Constantine VII (913-959) of France was about to invade the Fatimid territories, thus a naval forces was dispatched under Faraj Saqali. Hasan bin Ali al-Kalbi, the governor of Sicly and Faraj jointly invaded Kaloria and defeated the French forces. The French emperor was obliged to send tributes and a peace-negotiating embassy to the Fatimid court. On their way back to Maghrib, the Fatimid naval forces conquered Reggio and built there a mosque, the ruins of which have been unearthed recently.

In 335/947, Imam al-Mansur ordered yet another new capital built a short distance southwest of Kairwan, called Mansuria. It served a new Fatimid capital after Mahdiya.

Imam al-Mansur died in 341/952. F.Dachraoui writes in **Encyclopaedia of Islam** (1990. 6:434) that, "Mansur's personality shines with an unparalleled brilliance under the pens of the Ismaili authors, who, as also the Sunni chroniclers, show great wander in relating his exalted deeds and who dwell at length on giving accounts of the battles, rebellions and other bloody events. According to their accounts, he possessed only good qualities: he was generous and benevolent, level-headed and perspicacious, above all possessing a brilliant eloquence; since his youth, he had devoted himself to piety and study, and was deeply conscious of his high calling as impeccable Imam and of his grandeur as a monarch."

MUIZZ (341-365/952-975), 14TH IMAM

His name was Ma'd, and *kunya* was Abu Tamim, surnamed *al-Muizz li-din'allah* (Fortifier of the religion of God). He was born in Mahdiya in 319/931, and ascended in 341/952. His period is noted for the extension of the Fatimid domination from Maghrib to Egypt and Syria. His Caliphate is also acclaimed for the progress of learning and arts. He himself was a learned philosopher, scientist and astronomist.

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In 345/956, the Fatimid naval fleet inflicted a major defeat on the Byzantines in Italy, following several minor entanglements and forcing the emperor Constantine VII (913-959) to pay tribute and send a peace-negotiating embassy to Imam al-Muizz in 346/957. In 351/962, Ahmad bin Hasan, the second Kalbid governor of Sicily captured Taormina, whose name was changed to al-Muizzia in honour of Imam al-Muizz. In 354/964, following the accession of the emperor Nicephorus II Phocas (963-969), who had intentionally stopped the customary tribute to the Fatimids, the Byzantines were severely defeated on land and sea by the joint Fatimid and Kalbid forces, and occupied Rametta, the last ashes of the Byzantium; and the simultaneous victory at sea known as the *wak'at al-majaz* (battle of the straits). In 356/967, a peace treaty was concluded between the Fatimids and the Byzantines. This defeat of the Byzantines was indeed celebrated with pomp through out the Islamic world.

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Imam al-Muizz sent Jawhar as-Siqilli to conquer Egypt. Jawhar's march started from Kairwan with a huge army on 14th Rabi I, 357/February 4, 969. He landed at the ruins of the Tulunid dynasty (254-292/868-905) on 15th Shaban, 358/July 4, 969 where he was received with honour. In the same year, Jawhar dispatched a messenger towards Maghrib in presence of Imam al-Muizz with the glad tidings that Egypt had fallen to the Fatimids.

Jawhar also conquered Syria, and then he invited Imam al-Muizz in Egypt. After making necessary appointments in Maghrib, Imam al-Muizz departed from Mansuria on 21st Shawal, 361/August 15, 972 with his family and notable persons. His caravan reached Alexandria on 23rd Shaban, 362/May 29, 973. Abu Tahir Muhammad bin Ahmad, the *qadi* of Egypt, accompanied by the chief men, offered Imam al-Muizz their salutations. Towards the end of the month of Shaban, Imam al-Muizz left Alexandria and, on Saturday, the 2nd Ramzan, 363/June 6, 973, he stopped at Mina, the wharf of Egypt. Jawhar in Jazira warmly greeted him. Imam al-Muizz entered Cairo, henceforward; it became the capital of the Fatimids. Ibn Khallikan (3:380) writes that, "On arriving at Cairo, he went to the castle and entered a hall of audience where he fell prostrate in adoration of Almighty God. He then said a prayer of two *rakats* (i.e., the genuflections of prayer)."

The reign of Imam al-Muizz was one of the most glorious ever recorded in Egyptian history. He displayed judgment and justice in the management of his mixed subjects. He did not allow his troops to interfere with the people. He was well disposed towards the Copts. His land revenue reforms were highly admired, which he was ably assisted by his *vizir* Yaqub bin Killis. The Imam divided the provinces into districts and were placed under capable officers. The army was organized with a standing force and a militia to be summoned in times of war. A naval fleet was also organized to protect the coastal trade and commerce from pirates. Makrizi writes in **al-Khitat** (1:444) that, "The Franks were employed as craftsmen, making weapons for the navy and other services in Cairo." The Fatimids built a big dockyard (*dar al-sina'a*) at Alexandria and Damietta, inside the country on the Nile at Maks near Cairo and Aydhab near Sanga on the Red Sea opposite to Jeddah. The Arabic word *dar al-sina'a* for a dockyard is still current in the European languages as *arzenale* or *arsenale* in Italian and *arsenal* in Spanish, French and English. In the dockyard, more than 600 ships were built - the largest fleet that Egypt had ever seen since the Arab conquests. The commander of the naval force was called *Amir al-Bahr* (the chief of the sea), which came to be used in the European languages, such as *Amiralh* (Portuguese), *Amiral* (French) and *Admiral* (English).

Hussain Ibrahim Hasan and Taha Ahmad Sharf write in **al-Muizz li-din'allah Maktaba al-Mahda al-Miriyya** (Cairo, 1947, p. 139) that, "The personality of al-Muizz was clothed in the clean robes of holiness and majesty. The Fatimid Caliph was not, like his Umayyad and Abbasid rivals, a tyrant in running the affairs of the state. Neither was al-Muizz over-indulgent about pleasures. His subjects and helpers held him in high esteem as he belonged to the progeny of the Prophet." According to Theodore Noldeke in **Sketches from Eastern History** (Beirut, 1963, p. 90), "After their conquest of Egypt, the Fatimids were the most powerful princes of Islam, and it seemed at times as if even the form of power had passed from the Abbasids. The Fatimids, moreover, governed excellently as a rule, and brought Egypt to a high peak of prosperity." Writing on the then Islamic empires, Robert Payne observes in **The Holy Sword** (London, 1959, pp. 182-3) that, "There were now three Muhammadan empires: the Umayyad caliphs ruled over

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Spain, Iraq and Persia remained in the hands of the Abbasids and North Africa, Egypt, Syria and Arabia were in the hands of the Fatimids."

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Having consolidated the power of the Fatimid Caliphate, Imam al-Muizz died in 14th Rabi II, 365/December 21, 975 at the age of 44 years, after the Caliphate and Imamate of 23 years and 6 months. He ruled 20 years in Maghrib and 3 years also in Egypt. Philip K. Hitti writes in **Capital Cities of Arab Islam** (London, 1973, p. 119) that, "Under the reign of the first caliph to commence his rule in Egypt, Cairo had become not only a formidable rival of Baghdad, but its superior. It had become the leading Moslem state in the eastern Mediterranean." Stanley Lane Poole writes in **History of Egypt** (p. 98-99) that, "With the fourth caliph, however, al-Moizz, the conqueror of Egypt, the Fatimid entered upon a new phase. He was a man of politic temper, a born statesman, able to grasp the conditions of success, and to take advantage of every point in his favour. He was also highly educated, and not only wrote Arabic poetry and delighted in its literature, but studied Greek, mastered Berber and Sudani dialects, and even said to have taught himself Slavonic, in order to converse with his slaves from eastern Europe. His eloquence was such as to move his audience to tears. To prudent statesmanship he added a large generosity, and his love of justice was among his noblest qualities."

AZIZ (365-386/975-996), 15TH IMAM

He was born on 14th Muharram, 344/May 10, 955 in Mahdiya. His name was Nizar Abu Mansur, surnamed *al-Aziz bi-llah* (August by the grace of God). He assumed the Imamate and Caliphate on 14th Rabi II, 365/December 21, 975. He was tall, broad shouldered, with reddish hair and large eyes having a dark blue colour.

Imam al-Aziz was also known for his paternal care of the people and introduced many financial reforms in the country. He introduced the system of paying a fixed stipends for services to the official and household servants and also used to give them robes and mules to ride on. Among his outstanding reforms, the most significant was that he put down bribery and corruption with a firm hand in Egypt.

Writing in the year 372/982, the anonymous writer of **Hudud al-Alam** (tr. by V. Minorsky, London, 1937, p. 151) describes that, "Egypt is the wealthiest country of Islam, and in it lies numerous towns, all prosperous, flourishing, wealthy, and extremely favoured by nature in many respects. It produces textiles, handkerchiefs, and robes of various kinds, than which there are none more precious in the whole world - such as Egyptian woolen goods and textiles, and handkerchiefs made of *dabiqi* (silk brocade or linen drapes) and *khazz* (tissue of silk and wool). And in this country, good asses are found of great price. Fustat is the capital of Egypt. It is the wealthiest city in the world, extremely prosperous and very pleasant. It lies to the east of the river Nile."

Jawhar conquered Syria in 359/969, making Jafar bin Falah as a governor. When Imam al-Muizz was in Cairo, a Turkish commander Iftagin, under the Buwahids defeated the Fatimid governor of Damascus, and started the Abbasid *khutba*. Imam al-Muizz had offered him to come in Cairo, but Iftagin declined it, and as a result, Imam al-Muizz took field against him, but died at Balbis. Iftagin sacked Syria, thus Imam al-Aziz sent his general, Jawhar. He besieged Damascus on 22nd Zilkada, 365/July 22, 976 for two months. Meanwhile, the Qarmatians led by Hasan al-A'sam came to the help of Iftagin. Jawhar lifted the siege, because his supplies were running short, and went to Ramla, then returned to Cairo and reported to Imam al-Aziz. This time the Imam himself commanded his forces and attacked enemies with all his might at Ramla, and forced them to retreat. Iftagin and Hasan al-A'sam took their heels. Imam al-Aziz announced a reward for one lac *dinar* for capturing Iftagin. Ironically, Iftagin was caught by one of his friends and brought before the Imam. He, keeping with his nature, behaved very politely with Iftagin, and returned to him all his personal belongings and included him among his door-keepers (*hajib*), a high grade in the

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hierarchy of the Fatimid court. His behaviour with Iftagin was so remarkable that Iftagin himself admitted: "I blush to mount my horse in the presence of our Lord al-Aziz. I did everything to oppose him, but he did not seek revenge, and I dare not to look at him because of the gifts and favours with which he overwhelms me." The Qarmatian leader, Hasan al-A'sam was forced to flee from Ramla, and lost his influence in Damascus.

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When Iftagin fought with the Fatimid at Ramla, he had left behind Kassam Sharrab in Damascus. When Imam al-Aziz defeated Iftagin, he sent Fazal bin Saleh and Suleman bin Jafar Falah, one after another, but none could capture Damascus. Fazal bin Saleh retreated to Palestine and held a series of talks with the Hamdanid Abu Taghlib, who had been expelled from Mosul by the Buwahid Adud ad-Dawla (367-372/978-983). Abu Taghlib had also failed to occupy Damascus; therefore, he aspired to obtain at least its governorship from the Fatimid Imam al-Aziz. Abu Taghlib gave his words to Fazal bin Saleh in the campaign to conquer Damascus, but the latter had already allied himself with the Jarrahid leader, Mufraj bin Dagfal bin Jarrah of Palestine. In sum, Mufraj defeated Abu Taghlib in 369/979 and took possession of the whole territory of Palestine. His cooperation with Fazal bin Saleh was however short-lived, as he had shaken his hand with Kassam Sharrab, the chief of Damascus.

In 373/983, Imam al-Aziz sent Balaktagin, a Turkish commander of the Fatimid forces against these two rebels. He defeated Mufraj bin Dagfal in Palestine, who managed to flee to Antioch, where he took refuge with the Byzantines. Thence, Balaktagin proceeded to Damascus and defeated Kassam, and appointed Akhlaj as a governor, who was followed by Bekjur in 373/983.

Bekjur was a slave of Sa'd ad-Dawla (356-381/967-991), the Hamdanid chief of Aleppo. When Balaktagin had taken field against Kassam Sharrab in Damascus, Bekjur had provided necessary provisions to the Fatimid forces from Aleppo, and therefore, he was made the governor of Damascus after Akhlaj in appreciation of his aids. In the meantime, Bekjur sought permission from Imam al-Aziz to conquer Aleppo, and soon afterwards, he besieged Aleppo. Sa'd ad-Dawla, the chief of Aleppo sought reinforcement from the Byzantine, forcing Bekjur to lift the siege and retreat to Damascus.

Imam al-Aziz however retained Bekjur's governorship in Damascus, but was expelled later in 378/988. He persuaded the Imam to assign him with the command of a new expedition against Aleppo. He however acquired little help from the local Fatimid forces, but was defeated and killed in 381/991 by Sa'd ad-Dawla, who was aided as usual by the Byzantines.

Few years later, Imam al-Aziz once again turned his attention to conquer Aleppo. This time the Fatimid forces besieged Aleppo in 385/995 for several months at the command of Manjutagin. Meanwhile, the Byzantine emperor Basil II (975-1025) himself came with a large force to help Sa'd ad-Dawla's son, Sa'id ad-Dawla (381-392/992-1002) and saved Aleppo from going into Fatimid hands.

Inspite of political differences between the Fatimids and the Umayyad of Spain, there had been cultural and commercial transactions between the two Muslim empires. During Imam al-Aziz's period, the relations between him and Umayyad caliph al-Hakam II (350-366/961-976) were improved and there had been diplomatic correspondence between them as is learnt from a letter of Imam al-Aziz, vide **Nihayat al-Arab** (p. 58) by Nuwayri (d. 732/1332). Their relations can also be ascertained from the fact that the Umayyad Prince Muhammad bin Abdul Malik bin Abdur Rehman al-Nasir composed few verses in praise of Imam al-Aziz.

In Egypt, the new elements were enlisted in the Fatimid army as professional soldiers and given special accommodation areas in Cairo, known as *harat al-Atrak* (barrack of the Turks), and *harat al-Daylam* (barrack of the Iranians). This new fighting element sponsored by Imam al-Aziz, grew rapidly and before long its chiefs were appointed as commanders. In 381/991, the command of the Fatimid army was given to one of these men, called Manjutagin, with the title *amir al-juyush al-mansura* (commander of the victorious armies). He was charged to put down the disturbances

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in Syria, strike at the Byzantines in the north and bring Aleppo under the direct control of the Fatimids.

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It must also be known that the Katama Berbers enjoyed special privileges in the Fatimid army since beginning and were exempted from taxation. In Egypt, they began to dominate almost in all state affairs and wielded political influences. They were known in Egypt as *Maghriba* (the westerners). In contrast, the Turks and Iranians were called as *Mashriqa* (the easterners), who were also a counterpoise against the growing influence of the Berbers. In 380/990, Imam al-Aziz also erected an army corps named *al-Azizia*. In 385/995, *al-Azizia* together with other corps was dispatched to reinforce the Fatimid contingents in Syria.

The period of Imam al-Aziz on the whole was one of peace and prosperity. He also patronized scholars and encouraged learning. His generosity became so popular that the common people were comparatively happier in his regime. The trade flourished to such extent that the industry of Cairo produced such a fine cloth that a whole robe could be passed through a finger ring. In 365/976, Imam al-Aziz built the first market in Cairo along with the first bathhouses.

One of the famous persons during Imam al-Aziz's period was Abul Hussain Ali bin Qadi Noman, who attained a high rank of chief justice (*qadi al-qudat*) after the death of Qadi Abu Tahir in 367/977. His appointment was proclaimed at the summit of the mosque of al-Azhar and Jam-i'l Atiq in Cairo. He was also assigned with the supervision of cases of inheritance, the mint and the quality of gold and silver coins. He appointed his brother, Muhammad bin Noman as his deputy and the *qadi* of Mediterranean towns of Farama, Tunnis and Damietta. Qadi Abdul Hussain Ali was a prolific writer, upright as a judge, talented in Arabic literature and well steeped in poetry. He died on 6th Rajab, 374/December 3, 984 in Cairo, and the Imam offered his funeral prayer.

After the death of Qadi Abul Hussain Ali bin Noman, Imam al-Aziz wrote to his brother, Abu Abdullah Muhammad to take over the charge of the office of *qadi al-qudat* to fill the gap of his brother. In 382/992, Qadi Abdullah Muhammad had established a juridical office in the old mosque to give legal opinion according to the Fatimid law. He was also a man of great talent, skilled in the system of jurisprudence and diligent as a scholar. He died on 4th Safar, 389/January 25, 998 in Cairo. Imam al-Hakim led his funeral prayer.

In 375/985, one Muhallabi drew up an itinerary for the Fatimid Imam al-Aziz, which, for the first time, gave accurate information about the Sudan of which the other geographers of that century knew very little. His book was named, **al-Aziz**, which he dedicated to the Imam, and had become the main source of Yaqut (d. 626/1229) for the Sudan.

Ibn Taghri Birdi (4:152) writes that Imam al-Aziz had signed a truce for seven years with the Byzantine emperor in 377/987, stipulating three terms:- the release of 5000 Muslim prisoners captured by the Byzantines, the recitation of the Fatimid *khutba* in the grand mosque of Constantinople and the supply of the merchandise needed for the Egyptians.

Yaqub bin Killis was followed in rapid succession by six *vizirs*. In 380/991, Imam al-Aziz appointed a Copic Christian, Isa bin Nestorius (d.387/397) as his *vizir*, and the latter appointed a Jew, Manasseh bin Ibrahim al-Kazzaz as his deputy in Syria and Palestine. The *vizir* began to favour the Christians in Egypt and his deputy to the Jews in Syria and Palestine. When the Muslims made the complaints, Imam al-Aziz at once dismissed them in 385/995 and seized 300,000 *dinars* from Isa bin Nestorious and a large sum from Manesseh bin Ibrahim.

In 382/992, Abul Darda Muhammad bin al-Musayyib Uqayti (d. 386/996), the governor of Mosul, declared his loyalty to Imam al-Aziz and recited the Fatimid *khutba* in Mosul.

In 386/996, Imam al-Aziz had personally set out to command the Fatimid armies against the joint forces of the Hamdanids of Aleppo and the Byzantines, but he at once fell ill at Bilbis, the first junction on his route to Syria. When the Imam felt that the shadows of his death were closing upon him, he summoned Ibn Ammar and Qadi Muhammad bin Noman and declared to them his

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son, al-Hakim as his successor. Both are said to have sworn loyalty and obedience to the Imam's command. On 28th Ramzan, 386/October 14, 996, Imam al-Aziz met sudden death, from a stone in the kidney in the town of Bilbis.

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HAKIM (386-411/996-1021), 16TH IMAM

He was born on 23rd Rabi I, 375/August 14, 985 in Cairo, and was the first Fatimid Imam born on Egyptian soil. His name was al-Mansur Abu Ali, surnamed *al-Hakim bi-Amrillah* (He who governs by the orders of God). He acceded the throne in 386/996 at the age of 11 years, 5 months and 6 days. Makrizi writes in **Itti'az** (p. 386) that, "On the following morning the dignitaries assembled in the Grand Hall to await the new Caliph. Al-Mansur, wearing the diamond turban, entered the Hall and walked to the golden throne, the assembly bowing to the ground meanwhile. They greeted him with the *baya* as Imam and the title *al-Hakim bi-Amrillah* by which he was thereafter known." Abul Fawaris Ahmad bin Yaqub (d. 413/1022) writes in **Ar-Risala fi'l Imama** (comp. 408/1077) that Imam al-Hakim delivered his first speech from the pulpit of a mosque in Cairo on 386/996 and said: "O' people, surely God has made us superior by the word of Imamate. He has eternalized it in us, so that it may last until the day of doom. The one of us receives it from the other and the son inherits it from the father. This is the bounty of God, He gives it to whomever He wishes, and God is of bounty abounding."

Imam al-Hakim, assumed full power of the empire at the age of fourteen, and thus it does not appear to have affected his early education. He had a good command of Arabic tongue, and a fine knowledge of poetry at an early age. Antaki (d. 458/1065) writes in **Tarikh-i Antaki** (Beirut, 1909, p. 217) that, "He appears as a pleasant man with a sense of humour, and often exchanged jokes with those to whom he spoke in the streets." Antaki also writes, "Al-Hakim would frequently pause in the streets of his capital to exchange greetings or answer questions from his poor subjects." (Ibid. p. 200) Marshall Hodgson writes in **The Venture of Islam** (London, 1974, 2:26) that, "Al-Hakim wished, above all, to be the perfect ruler; widely generous, enforcing strict good order, and absolutely just to all the people. Personally, he avoided all luxury and mounted a simple donkey for his excursions."

Imam al-Hakim is described as generous and brave by the chroniclers. His clothes were simple, made chiefly of wool, and chose to ride on an ass. He disliked diamond turban and wore plain white scarf. His food was simple, and that too cooked by his mother only. He was an impressive figure, tall and broad-shouldered with a powerful voice. His large eyes were dark blue and flecked with deep reddish gold.

The Berbers dominated the Fatimid army, known in Egypt as *Maghriba* (the westerners). Imam al-Aziz had introduced the Turkish and Iranian soldiers in the army, known as *Mashriqa* (the easterners), as a counterpoise against the fast growing influence of the Berbers. Only two days after the death of Imam al-Aziz, the Maghriba faction in the army began to raise and stipulated that no one but Ibn Ammar should be the *wasita* (chief minister). Ibn Ammar negotiated with them, securing their goodwill in exchange for increased payment.

Ibn Ammar intended to establish a purely Berber government in Egypt. His rule, indeed, was characterized by unmasked favourism of the Maghriba. Rudhrawari (d. 488/1095) writes that, "The aim of the Maghriba was to abolish the institution of the Fatimid Imam and build an empire of their own. Ibn Ammar's friends advised him to kill Imam al-Hakim. Ibn Ammar, who intended to follow their advices, but dissuaded later on because Imam al-Hakim was too young and harmless." (cf. **Tajarib al-Umam** by Miskawayh, p. 222). The Berber tribe of Katama, known as Maghriba appears to have been the centres of this change, as they considered that they had been the conquerors of Maghrib and of Egypt, and why should the fruits of this conquest be laid at the feet of an Arab dynasty in the progeny of Ali. Immediately after his appointment, Ibn Ammar began to allocate high positions to his supporters. He dismissed the Turkish and Iranian soldiers

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from the high posts, and restored the power of the Berbers. He also curtailed the power of Abul Futuh Barjawan, the regent of the Imam, and confined him as a tutor of Imam al-Hakim in the palace. The chiefs of Mashriqa thus had been dismissed and some of their supporters were even executed. Annual allowances to them were stopped, and many of them fled from Egypt fearing being killed.

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Barjawan allied himself with the Turkish commander called, Manjutagin, who himself was a great force in Syria. He readily espoused to Barjawan's faction, and formed an alliance with some of the Bedouin chiefs and left Damascus at the head of six thousand troops to march towards Egypt. Ibn Ammar mobilized his troops under the leadership of Suleman bin Falah and provided him with the large sums of money to be used in diverting the loyalty of the Bedouin chiefs against Manjutagin. The two armies clashed between Ramla and Askalan, and after three days of minor encounters, they fought the final battle. Manjutagin was subdued and taken prisoner and sent captive to Cairo. The battle resulted in victory for the Maghriba, but impugned a dangerous problem to the state, a fast growing opposition between the Maghriba and Mashriqa in Egypt. The defeated Mashriqa arrived in Cairo and threatened Ibn Ammar's rule, while the majority of Maghriba were in Syria with Suleman bin Falah. To overcome the problem, Ibn Ammar planned to increase his supporters and at the same time adopted a moderate line of policy towards Mashriqa, and pardoned Manjutagin. Suleman bin Falah also followed a similar policy in Syria and tried to convince its inhabitants that his plans were for peace and security. He dismissed Jaysh ibn Samsama from the governorship of Tripoli and replaced him with his own brother Ali.

Thus, Jaysh, a powerful Katama chief, went to Cairo to revenge himself by attempting to overthrow Ibn Ammar. He made an alliance with Barjawan and the chiefs of Mashriqa. Barjawan's opportunity to gain power came with the presence of Jaysh in Egypt. He provoked riots and disturbances in Cairo and threw the blames on Ibn Ammar and his supporters. Ibn Ammar invited them to his palace under the pretext to discuss the riots between Berbers and Turks, but secretly had planned their executions. However, Barjawan, who had planted many spies in Ibn Ammar's palace, was informed of this and formed a counter plan. He and his supporters decided to accept the invitation. They planned to foil the attack by retreating among them, thus exposing Ibn Ammar's treasonable intentions. Barjawan's plan succeeded and he and his allies returned to the royal palace, declared Ibn Ammar to be a traitor and prepared to fight. With as many supporters as he could muster, Ibn Ammar left Cairo and camped in the desert. Barjawan followed him and in a battle, which lasted half a day, Ibn Ammar was defeated, and fled. By the overthrow of Ibn Ammar in 387/997, Barjawan assumed the office of *wasita* (chief minister) after Ibn Ammar had held office for a little less than eleven months. Barjawan took out Imam al-Hakim in public to demonstrate his loyalty towards the Fatimids.

Barjawan pardoned Ibn Ammar and granted him the same monthly allowances and supplies that he had received during the period of Imam al-Aziz. With his accession to power, Abul Futuh Barjawan had to face a number of problems. He however handled the situation, and endeavoured to get an end of it, or at least to lessen the rivalry between Maghriba and Mashriqa. In the appointment of key posts, he tried to create equality, which would satisfy the average persons of both groups. He appointed Ismail bin Fahl al-Katami, a Maghriba chief as the governor of Tyre and Bushara al-Ikhshidi, a Mashriqa chief as the governor of Damascus. For the governor generalship of Syria and the supreme command of the Fatimid forces stationing there, he chose Jaysh ibn Samsama, a powerful Maghriba chief. He made an efficient Christian, Fahd bin Ibrahim al-Katib as his personal secretary and invested him the title of *al-Rais* (the master).

Barjawan now governed the state with unbounded authority. He wanted to make the Imam merely an ornamented figure in the palace, and bring him out to grace only in the state functions. He treated Imam al-Hakim as helpless child and did not allow him even to ride on horseback. Ibn Muyassar in **Akhbar al-Misr** (p. 56) and Makrizi in **al-Khitat** (2:4) consider such treatment as dictatorship (*istibdad*), causing Imam al-Hakim's resentment which resulted his death.

Ibn Qalanisi (p. 51) writes that, "Abul Fazal Raydan, the bearer of the royal parasol (*mizalla*), once said to Imam al-Hakim, "Barjawan is planning to emulate the career of Malik Kafur (d.

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357/968) and purposes to deal with you as Malik Kafur dealt with Ikhshidi's son by isolating you and eliminating your power. The right thing to do is his immediate murder and administer your state alone." Imam replied, "If this is your opinion and advice, then I need your help." Barjawan was finally slain on 16th Rabi II, 390/March 25, 1000 by Abul Fazal Raydan, who carried out the murder with his associates in a place called Bustan Duwayrat al-Tin. Barjawan held his office for 2 years, 7 months and 29 days. In terms of wealth and power, Barjawan was typical of the top echelon of the ruling circles. Ibn Bassam (d. 542/1148) writes in **al-Dhakhira fi Mahasin al-Jazira** (Cairo, 1945, p. 232) that after the death of Barjawan, an officer of central treasury found in his house: one hundred scarves (*mandil*) of different colours, one hundred another kind of scarves (*sharabiya*), one thousand pairs of trousers (*sirwal*), one Armenian silk (*takka*), an uncountable quantity of clothes, jewels, gold, perfumes and furniture, three hundred thousand *dinars*, one hundred and fifty horses and mules in his personal stable, three hundred pack horses and mules and a hundred and fifty saddles, twenty of which were pure gold.

Imam al-Hakim took over the power into hand at the age of fourteen years. Barjawan's execution provoked some apprehension among the people, but he skillfully navigated the storm. He went out to the people and declared: "I have been informed of an intrigue which Barjawan made against me, and for that I caused him to be executed." Makrizi writes in **Itti'az** (p. 427) that Imam al-Hakim speaking before an assembly next day of state dignitaries (*shuyukh ad-dawla*), the leaders of Katama and Turks, said: "Barjawan was my slave and I employed him. He acted in good faith and I treated him with favours. He then began to misbehave, so I killed him." The death of Barjawan marks the beginning of the second period of Imam al-Hakim's reign.

The period between 390/1000 and 396/1007 was critical because of famine and economical distress. There was also a general deterioration of economic and social life between 395/1004 and 411/1021 when most of the royal decrees (*manshur*) covering religious and social legislation were issued by the Imam. He had to take drastic measures by pressure of circumstances. On account of his extreme measures to meet the challenges, he became a controversial figure. Historians have held different opinions for him. Abul Fida, Ibn Athir and Ibn Khallikan depict him as an heretic and wily tyrant. Prof. Hitti, on the other hand, defends him, and writes in **The Origins of the Druze People and Religion** (New York, 1928, p. 27) that, "The fact that al-Hakim introduced many reforms regulating weights and measures, fought immorality with police ordinances ... amidst a hostile milieu indicates that he was not the kind of maniac or fool whose biography these early writers have left us."

Antaki and Ibn al-Sabi's records discrediting Imam al-Hakim's personality should be treated with a degree of caution since both historians were aggressive and lived in distant countries. Imam al-Hakim's so called cruelty may have been the result of the circumstances rather than the acts of a sadist, or were perhaps exaggerated according to the view of the hostile historians. He ascended when he was still a child and witnessed fierce struggle and rivalry for power among the high officials of his state. This may have created a sense of insecurity, which led him to resort to so called cruelty as a tool of maintaining his power. Ibn al-Futi, who is quoted by Makrizi in **Itti'az** (p. 411) suggests that, "al-Hakim's cruelty was both part of his policy to abolish the corruption resulting from his father's great tolerance, and vengeance against those who oppose the Islamic law of the state."

Muhammad Abdullah al-Inan writes in his **al-Hakim bi-Amrillah wa Asrar al-Dawa al-Fatimiya** (Cairo, 1937, p. 173) that, "We are however unable to understand different political enigmas of al-Hakim, but it is beyond doubt that the ordinances and injunctions he imposed were not against the Islamic traditions to a little extent. These were also not the result of the whimsical thoughts, but based on the ordinary reformations of the state, therefore, the wisdom and strategy motivated behind them can never be ruled out." Dozy also writes in **Essai sur l'historire de I'Islamism** (Leiden, 1879, p. 148) that, "We fail to know the enigmatic personality of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim, therefore, it is not plausible to draw a conclusion that these were the outcome of whimsical thoughts."

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The constant struggle for power between the two elements in the Fatimid's army presented Imam al-Hakim with a very serious problem. His position was also threatened by the growing influence of *mudabbir ad-dawla* (the administrator of state affairs), better known as *wasita* (the mediator, executor of the Caliph's orders or chief minister), simply an intermediary between the Imam and the people. Both Ibn Ammar and Barjawan had forcefully seized power and became themselves as *wasitas*, and misused the office. This was the first crack in the political structure. In the face of this trend, Imam al-Hakim's attitude towards each successive *wasita* during the last twenty years of his Caliphate, was well and carefully planned to control his exercise of power. He did not abolish the institution of *wasita*, but restricted its power. Makrizi writes in **Itti'az** (p. 390) that, "After the appointment of al-Hussain bin Jawhar as *wasita* in 390/1000, he was ordered not to receive or deal with petitions in his own house or in public streets; those who had cases of complaints should be told to deliver them to him only at the office in the palace." Hussain bin Jawhar together with his secretary, Fahd bin Ibrahim, would come early to the palace, receive the petitions, study them and carry them to the Imam for final judgment. Except for Hussain bin Jawhar and Ali bin Falah, none of the *wasita* had a military background. None was powerful tribal chief or a chief of any element of the army. Most of them were from poor class. No *wasita* was allowed to remain in office for a long period. In the course of his twenty years of rule, Imam al-Hakim employed more than fifteen *wasita*, some held office for as little as ten days. Severity was the prominent feature in Imam al-Hakim's attitude towards his *wasitas*, and the majority of those who occupied that office were executed. Thus, Ibn Hammad (d. 628/1230) writes in **Akhbar al-Muluk Bani Ubayd wa Siyaratihim** (p. 57) that al-Jarjara'i, a high official who had lost both hands by the command of Imam al-Hakim, would tell those who remarked upon such treatment that: "This was a punishment which I deserved for betraying *amir al-mominin's* orders." According to Marshall Hodgson in **The Venture of Islam** (London, 1974, 2:27), "He was merciless to any of the great who, he thought, took advantage of their position."

Historians have generally shown Imam al-Hakim's attitude as a tyrant and blood-thirsty. Such views, however, do not seem to be quite accurate, and many have been hastily arrayed without a thorough investigation. P.J. Vatikiotis writes in **The Fatimid Theory of State** (Lahore, 1957, p. 149), that, "These presentations have been hastily arrayed without a genuine investigation of al-Hakim's reign." This part of Imam al-Hakim's policy cannot be described as blood-thirsty or insane. Imam al-Hakim was extremely engaged in a deadly struggle of retaining the Fatimid Caliphate. He was not fighting only the secular tendencies of political power groups, but also attempting to rally the fast disintegrating Fatimid ranks in the face of impending danger.

It is a common method, which most rulers used to adopt to silence opposition and prevent threats to their own powers. There is no evidence suggesting that, at any time, Imam al-Hakim ordered the execution of someone just for the sake of killing. His bursts of killing, as M.G.S. Hodgson says in "al-Darazi and Hamza in the **Origin of the Druze Religion** (JAOS, 82, 1962, p. 14), "were most obviously turned against the great and the proud, the holders of positions and those ambitious to be such." There were more precisely against those from whom Imam al-Hakim anticipated danger or considered a threat to his power. A comparative study of his attitude towards *qadi al-qudat* (chief judge) with the manner in which he treated the *wasita* and military chiefs illustrates this point. It was only *qadis* who opposed his policy who were executed; others were treated quite normally. During his entire reign, Imam al-Hakim employed five persons to that post of *qadi al-qudat*. Muhammad bin Noman died in 389/998 and Imam al-Hakim himself led the prayer at his funeral. His successor, Hussain bin Noman served until 395/1004 when he was executed after being found guilty of theft. Muhammad bin Yousuf al-Kindi (d. 330/951) writes in **Kitab al-Umra wa'l Kitab al-Qudat** (London, 1912, p. 608) that, "Hussain bin Noman stole twenty thousand *dinars* from an orphan whose father entrusted the money to him. His trial was personally conducted by al-Hakim." Abdul Aziz bin Noman succeeded until 399/1008 when he was dismissed, and two years later executed for opposing Imam al-Hakim and supporting Hussain bin Jawhar. Malik bin Sa'id al-Fariqi served for 6 years, 9 months and 10 days (399/1008 to 405/1014) and was executed for opposing Imam al-Hakim's policy for imposing Islamic laws. In 405/1014, Imam al-Hakim appointed Muhammad bin Abi'l Awwam as *qadi al-qudat* and Khatgin as a *da'i al-duat*, and both remained in office until the end of Imam al-Hakim's rule because of their loyalty with the rules imposed.

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Barjawan was able to overcome the chronic problems in Syria, and appointment of Jaysh ibn Samsama as a governor general and the commander of the Fatimid forces, indicates a shrewd policy. Jaysh was a powerful Maghriba leader and was also a popular figure among the Mashriqa. Initially, he had four major problems to be confronted when he reached Syria: the rebellion in Tyre, the rebellion of Mufraj bin Dagfal, the unrest in Damascus and the Byzantine invasions into the Fatimid territory. Jaysh at first moved into the action to subdue the rebellion in Tyre, an important port on the Mediterranean coast; whose inhabitants, supported by the Byzantines, had rose against the Fatimid suzerainty during the clash between Barjawan and Ibn Ammar. Their leader, a sailor called Ullaqah had declared Trye an independent, and issued new coinage with the slogan, "Dignity and plenty instead of humility and poverty, Amir Ullaqah" (*uzzun ba'da faqah al-amir Ullaqah*). Jaysh appointed Abu Abdullah al-Hussain and Ibn Nasir ad-Dawla al-Hamdani to lead the expedition against Trye, and himself stayed with the rest of the forces in Palestine, preparing another expedition against Mufraj bin Dagfal. He also ordered the governors of Tripoli and Sidon to join together with their warships in the forthcoming fighting against Tyre. In the ensuing battle, the Fatimid forces ravaged the Byzantine ships, and at length, Tyre fell before the onslaught of the Fatimid forces. The Fatimid troops entered the city and declared immunity (*aman*) and safe-conduct for all who remained in their homes. Ullaqah was arrested and sent to Cairo.

After suppression of rebellion in Tyre, Jaysh proceeded towards Palestine, where Mufraj bin Dagfal was plundering the towns and attacking the pilgrim caravans. When confronted with the big army of Jaysh, Mufraj capitulated and sent a delegation, asking for safe-conduct and promised to advance his loyalty to the Fatimids. Jaysh, who was pressed by more serious problems in northern Syria, pardoned him and withdrew his army to the north.

Jaysh thence advanced towards Damascus, and as soon as he entered the city, according to Ibn Athir (9: 50), he declared that his prime objective was to wage war against the Byzantine and establish peace and security in Damascus. He also announced the death penalty for any one, whether his soldiers or other citizens, who proved guilty of disturbing the peace in the city. Jaysh then moved towards Hims, where the governor of Tripoli and his troops and a number of volunteers, augmented Jaysh's army in his fight against the Byzantines, who had besieged Afamiya at that time.

Jaysah arrived at Afamiya during the hour when the city was in great distress and about to fall into the hands of Byzantines. In the ensuing battle lasted for a few days, Jaysh faced defeat in the beginning. In the interim, a Muslim soldier managed to kill the Byzantine commander, causing demoralization among the Christian troops. The Byzantine troops were defeated, who took wild flight from the field. Jaysh followed the defeated Byzantines as far as Antioch and besieged the city for a few days, but he at once lifted the siege and returned to Damascus.

It must be remembered that Ibn Ammar had instituted a group of the young men (*ahdath*) from among the Maghriba in Damascus against the Mashriqa. The Ahdath, an urban militia, commanded by *al-Rais* (master) or *al-Rais al-Bilad*, whose influence exceeded that of the *qadi*. As armed and pugnacious men of the native-born population, the Ahdath had constituted in face of the political authorities. The Ahadath had assumed the principal power and were the main cause of the troubles in Damascus. Jaysah tried to cope with these elements and finally decided to eliminate them once and for all. During his early arrival in Damasus, he delayed his plan owing to the raids of the Byzantines on northern Syria. After suppression of the Byzantine influence in Tyre and the troubles created by Mufraj bin Dagfal, he returned to Damascus to strike a final blow on the Ahdath. According to Qalanisi (p. 51), he invited the chiefs of Ahdath to his camp, which he had pitched outside the city, and had them killed. He at once besieged the city and sent his troops inside to search and kill the remaining ashes of Ahdath. This operation clean-up cost the death toll of 1200 persons and brought fear to the inhabitants, but Jaysh declared for their safe-conduct and promised security and peace under the suzerainty of the Fatimids. This was of course a bloody operation, but at the same time it was a last resort and the only effective solution to solve the problems of Damascus, where peace was restored for a long time. During the first three years

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of Imam al-Hakim's rule, two major anti-Fatimid uprisings occurred in Damascus. It was the untiring efforts of Jaysh ibn Samsama that these rebellions had been subdued in 388/998. Imam al-Hakim's aim was to win the loyalty, therefore, he paid due attention to the welfare of Damascus and appointed considerable governors, some of whom were recalled after only a few months. Thus, 21 governors are reported to have been appointed in Syria during the 22 years of Imam al-Hakim's rule. He did not hesitate to dismiss any governor who exceeded his authority or caused discontent among the inhabitants.

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Jaysh ibn Samsama died on 390/1000 at Damascus. His son went to Cairo with a paper on which his father had written his will and a detailed statement of all his property: all this, he declared, belonged to Imam al-Hakim; his children had no rights. The property thus valued was estimated at 200,000 pieces of gold. His son brought all this before the Imam, who said, "I have read your father's will and the statement of the money and goods of which he has disposed by his will. Take it, and enjoy it in tranquility and for your happiness."

Imam al-Hakim had also contemplated to extend his authority to Aleppo, the greatest centre of northern Syria. The last Hamdanid ruler, Sa'id ad-Dawla had been killed in 392/1002 by the conspiracy of his minister, called Lulu; who abolished the Hamdanid dynasty in Aleppo and established his own. The real power behind Aleppo was however the Byzantines, who used to be called when their help needed to the rulers. Thus, Imam al-Hakim made a non-aggression pact (*hudna*) with Basil II, the emperor of Byzantine and weakened the reliance of Aleppo on Byzantine help.

There appears different of views as to the negotiation of non-aggression pact (*hudna*) between the Muslim and Christian empires. Ibn Qalanisi (p. 54) writes that in 390/1000, Barjawan moved first by sending a friendly letter through his Christian secretary, Fahd bin Ibrahim al-Katib, expressing the Fatimid desire for the pact. Antaki (p. 184) however states that the Byzantine emperor, Basil II took the initiative by deputing his two envoys to negotiate peace with the Fatimids. In sum, the agreement was initially for a period of ten years, but it remained enforced through out Imam al-Hakim's period, and the relations between them were strengthened. Envoys and presents were exchanged between the two rulers and trade and commercial activities continued uninterrupted except for a brief period.

The events which occurred in Aleppo after the death of its ruler, Lulu in 399/1008 facilitated Imam al-Hakim's policy and assisted him to achieve his goal. Lulu's son Mansur, succeeding his father, was faced with numerous enemies, including Abul Hayja, the Hamdanid prince who came from Byzantium with Byzantine support to restore the rule of his ancestors. Mansur received investiture from Imam al-Hakim and virtually became a Fatimid vassal. The Imam supported Mansur against Abul Hayja, who had taken field and defeated.

In 406/1016, Mansur was defeated in a battle by Saleh bin Mirdas, the chief of the Banu Kilab. Mansur took refuge with the Byzantines after leaving a citadel under the control of a certain Fath, who was secretly in contact with Imam al-Hakim. Thus, the Imam granted the title of *Asad ad-Dawla* (lion of the state) to Saleh bin Mirdas and *Mubarak ad-Dawla* (blessed of the state) to Fath. On the other hand, Imam al-Hakim commanded his troops encamped in Syria to move towards Aleppo to prevent any pact between Saleh and Fath against the Fatimids. In 407/1017, the first Fatimid governor appointed by Imam al-Hakim entered Aleppo, called Fatik, bearing the title of *Aziz ad-Dawla*. Ibn al-Adim (d. 660/1262) writes in **Zubdat al-Halab fi Tarikh Halab** (Damascus, 1951, 1:214) that Imam al-Hakim issued an edict addressing to the inhabitants of Aleppo that, "When *Amir al-mominin* learned of the tyranny and ill treatment you suffered from those in powers, burdening you with taxes and harsh imposts out of all proportion to the ways of Islam, he, may God strengthen his power, ordered supplies to be sent to you from the state's stores and to exempt you from the *kharaj* until the year 407. By this you will know that the light of righteousness has risen and the darkness of tyranny has been dispelled."

The Byzantine emperor however opposed the Fatimid foothold in Aleppo, but did not break the non-aggression pact. He put restrictions upon the trade with Aleppo and cemented his close ties

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with the Mirdasids in order to employ them against Fatik. The remote distance of Cairo, the threats and offers of his Byzantine contacts and his personal ambition, made it easy for Fatik to show his back to the Fatimids. Soon afterwards, Fatik began to rule as an independent ruler in Aleppo and dismissed the officials appointed by Imam al-Hakim and employed men of his own choice.

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Imam al-Hakim realized that a demonstration of the Fatimid arm forces was necessary to maintain his authority in Aleppo, therefore, he ordered his governor in Syria to prepare for a quick expedition against Fatik. On the other side, the troops of the Byzantine also came into action and started moving from the north to the south to support their interests. It was only the sudden death of Imam al-Hakim that had prevented the two empires from breaking peace which had lasted between them for more than 20 years.

Imam al-Muizz had vested Buluggin bin Ziri (d. 373/984) with the governorship of all the Fatimid dominions in the Maghrib except for the Kalbid Sicily and Tripoli in 361/972. Later on, Buluggin asked Imam al-Aziz to give him rule over Tripoli as well. His request was granted and from 365/975, Tripoli began to be ruled by the Zirids. Buluggin appointed Tamsulat bin Bakkar as the *amir* of Tripoli, who governed the province for 20 years. In 386/996, after the death of Mansur, the second Zirid ruler, the relation between Tamsulat and Badis (d. 406/1016), the third Zirid ruler were strained. Tamsulat wrote to Cairo, asking Barjawan to send a new *amir* for Tripoli. Barjawan's error was that without the consent of Badis, he appointed Yanis as the *amir* of Tripoli in 388/998, who was then the *amir* of Barqa. Badis wrote a letter to Yanis, asking for an explanation of his move from Barqa to Tripoli, but he received no satisfactory reply. Realizing the danger that Yanis represented, Badis sent his troops into battle against him. In the ensuing battle, Yanis was killed and his forces retreated to Tripoli, where they barricaded themselves awaiting help from Cairo.

The above military actions of Barjawan in Tripoli supported no decree from Imam al-Hakim. It however affected the relations between the Fatimids and the Zirids. In addition, Tripoli, over which the dispute had begun, was occupied neither by the Fatimids nor by the Zirids, but it came in the hands of the enemy of both, i.e., the Banu Zanata. Fulful (d. 402/1011), the chief of Zanata tribe had taken an opportunity and proceeded towards Tripoli. He entered the city and declared his support against the Zirids and proclaimed his loyalty to the Umayyad of Spain.

Hence, the Fatimids lost Tripoli for about ten years (390-400/999-1009). After restoration of peace in Egypt, Imam al-Hakim turned his attention towards Tripoli. He dispatched his forces at the command of Yahya al-Andulusi as a new *amir* of Tripoli, and commanded Raydan at Tripoli to give Yahya a sum of money for expenses. Raydan, who most probably appropriated the money, instead gave Yahya a signed order to collect money from Barqa. When Yahya reached Barqa, he found the state treasury depleted. Most of the soldiers in his troops belonged to Banu Qorra, whom he had promised generous payment. Thus, Yahya faced difficulties in the field. Banu Qorra not only deserted Yahya, but they also raided his camps in angry and pillaged whatever they found and returned to their territory. Henceforward, Yahya entered Tripoli with the remaining troops. He was overpowered by the Zanata chief, Fulful, who humiliated him and took control of Tripoli, proclaiming his loyalty to the Umayyad of Spain. On other side, Imam al-Hakim did not send any reinforcement to regain Tripoli, and as a result, the Fatimids lost their suzerainty in Maghrib. Their relations with the Zirids also deteriorated, and the Sanhaja tribe ruled there independently.

In 395/1004, Imam al-Hakim faced the most serious challenge to his authority against the rebellion that rocked the foundation of his state. This was the rebellion of Abu Raqwa, an Umayyad prince who united the forces of Berbers of Zanata with those of the Arab tribe of Banu Qorra to lead them against the Fatimids. The word *raqwa* means *leather bag*, in which travellers, especially the Sufis, carried water during journey. He was an Umayyad prince from the line of Marwan bin Hakam. In his twenties, he fled from Spain and travelled to Maghrib, Egypt, Yamen, Mecca and Syria; testing the possibility of creating a group strong enough to support the

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Umayyad cause. At length, he succeeded to generate a large following in Maghrib and proclaimed himself as an *amir*.

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Besides the rooted opposition of Zanata and the dissatisfaction of Banu Qorra with the Fatimids, the economic factors also appear to have been the main cause behind the rebellion of Abu Raqwa. The province of Barqa in Maghrib was very poor, and its treasury was even insufficient to supply the needs of the small army which Imam al-Hakim sent in 391/1000 to restore Fatimid suzerainty in Tripoli. Its commercial life was limited and its income depended upon its limited agricultural output. The whole of Maghrib preceding the rebellion was caught with economic crisis, resulting a sort of catastrophe in 395/1004. Ibn Idhari (d. 712/1312) writes in **Akhbar al-Andalus wa'l Maghrib** (1:256) that, "In 395/1004, there was a catastrophe in Africa. The poor died and the money of the rich vanished. Prices rose and food became impossible to find. The people of Badia left their homes. Houses became empty and there was no one to occupy them. With all this there was a plague of cholera." Abu Raqwa understood the difficulties of the tribesmen, their overwhelming desire to solve their problems, and therefore, he concentrated his effort to this point. The situation turned in his favour as an effective tool of his rebellion. When the people agreed to follow his rebellious leadership, the first pact he executed with the people concerning the booty and gains resulting from war. It was resolved to divide the booty into three shares: one for each tribe and one third to be retained under Abu Raqwa's control in order to form a treasury to help during the war. He also promised to give the chiefs the palaces and houses of the Fatimid state in Cairo and other fertile regions in Egypt.

After being assured himself of sufficient support from the two principal tribes, Abu Raqwa canvassed neighboring districts, where he delivered speeches about Islam in a revolutionary manner. The tribesmen were fascinated by his eloquence, and assembled under his leadership against the Fatimids. Sandal, the Fatimid chief of Barqa immediately reported to Imam al-Hakim and asked permission to campaign against him. According to Ibn Athir (9:82), "Al-Hakim, who apparently did not realize the urgency of the problem, neither gave permission nor sent help but recommended diplomacy, not militant stance as a solution." Sandal's action failed, and Abu Raqwa with his troops swiftly marched to invade the city of Barqa. Sandal and his troops met them outside the city, and were subdued after a fierce fighting. Sandal retreated and barricaded himself inside the city. Sandal also contacted Ibn Taybun, the chief of the Berber tribe of Lawata, who came to the rescue and forced Abu Raqwa to break the siege, but failed to defeat him. Abu Raqwa then inflicted a heavy defeat on Lawata's forces and got the loss of many fighters including Ibn Taybun. The inhabitants of Barqa with their chief Sandal took advantage of Abu Raqwa's temporary withdrawal from their city, and strongly fortified its walls, digging huge trenches around them and storing as much food and supplies as they could. When Abu Raqwa returned to the siege, he found the city in a much stronger position to defend than before. Several months of siege, he failed to convince Sandal to surrender. Meanwhile, Imam al-Hakim sent an army of five thousand men under the leadership of Yanal to relieve Barqa. Yanal had to cross considerable stretch of desert before he reached Barqa, and Abu Raqwa sent a body of cavalry across the route to fill in the wells. He then waited at the point farthest from Egypt to meet Yanal's forces, who arrived tired, exhausted and thirsty. Yanal was defeated and was scourged to death. Abu Raqwa sacked his all equipments and supplies, and returned to Barqa. Sandal, together with his family, fled to Cairo. In the month of Zilhaja, 395/October, 1005, Abu Raqwa captured Barqa, and declared himself *amir al-mominin*. This was struck on the coinage too, and the *khutba* was read in his name.

Al-Musabbihi (d. 420/1029) writes that Abu Raqwa's supporters regarded him as a caliph. About a year after his occupation of Barqa, Abu Raqwa was driven out by the threat of famine and plague. He and his supporters left Barqa as if they were migrating from one land to another, and proceeded towards Alexandria. Imam al-Hakim began his preparations to quell the rebellion, and appointed Fazal bin Saleh to arrange a large force to meet Abu Raqwa in the field. Meanwhile, a report came of Abu Raqwa's movement towards Alexandria. Fazal sent a detachment at the command of Qabil to intercept the rebels, and prevent them from reaching the city. The two armies met in Dhat al-Hamam in Alexandria, where Abu Raqwa won a victory over Qabil. Thence, Abu Raqwa resumed his march towards Alexandria. He besieged it for several months, provoking

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extreme alarms in Cairo, and a large force had been dispatched from Cairo in command of Fazal bin Saleh. Abu Raqwa failed to capture Alexandria, so he turned towards Cairo. He reached at Fayyum and camped to plan the final blow against the Fatimids. Imam al-Hakim raised reinforcement of four thousand horsemen at the command of Ali bin Falah to Jiza to prevent Abu Raqwa's troops from raiding areas close to Cairo. Knowing this, Abu Raqwa sent a division of his troops which ambushed Ali bin Falah, killed many of his men. Skirmishes between the two forces continued until they finally met at Ra's al-Barqa in Fayyum district.

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It should be noted that a secret pact between Abu Raqwa and the Bedouin chiefs in the Fatimid forces had stipulated that when he would attack, they would withdraw from Fazal bin Saleh's side to create fear and confusion. Fazal was fully aware of this, and on the day of the battle, he summoned all the Bedouin chiefs to his tent. When the attack took place, the Bedouin chiefs, being the prisoners virtually in Fazal's tent, were unable to play their part in accord with the pact with Abu Raqwa, and their troops, unaware of their masters' pact with Abu Raqwa, fought fiercely. Expecting a victory, the troops of Abu Raqwa were easily ambushed and defeated, and he himself fled to the south, and then to Nubia, a large country stretching from Aswan to Khartoum, and from Red Sea to the Libyan desert Abu Raqwa reached at Dumqula, the capital of Nubia, where he pretended to be an ambassador of the Fatimid at the court of the Nubian king. Fazal followed close behind to the Nubian frontier and managed to find out Abu Raqwa, and took him prisoner in 397/1004. He was brought to Cairo, and was paraded through the streets. Ibn Qalanisi (d. 555/1160) writes in **Tarikh-i Dimashq** (p. 65) that Abu Raqwa had written a poetical letter to Imam al-Hakim, begging him for mercy, but the Imam refused pardon. But al-Musabbihi (d. 420/1029) as quoted by Makrizi in **Itti'az** (p. 396) however refutes it and suggests that Imam al-Hakim intended to pardon Abu Raqwa as Imam al-Hakim had personally told him while talking about Abu Raqwa, "I did not want to kill him and what happened to him was not of my choosing." Ibn Athir (9:84) writes that, "Abu Raqwa died from humiliation and the cruel treatment during the parade, but was not executed." It transpires that Imam al-Hakim did not wish to execute him and was waiting the termination of the parade to grant him mercy, but he was died.

In 398/1005, the Nile rising only 16 yards and 16 fingers flow with the result that there was a great rise in prices and hardship. The single bread (*al-khubz*) became so dear that it could be obtained with great difficulty. It was followed by disease and plague together with malnutrition. Imam al-Hakim immediately exempted the taxes and formulated strict measures to cope with the situation and instituted death penalty for those who inflated prices or hoarded commodities, which produced the desired effect very soon.

Created by Arab tribes in Palestine, headed by Mufraj bin Dagfal al-Jarrah Taiy, Imam al-Hakim had to face another rebellion hatched in 397/1004, which lasted for about three years. This was the rebellion of the tribe of Banu Jarrah, a part of the Yameni tribe, called Taiy, who had settled in southern parts of Palestine in the Balqa region. Unlike the revolt of Abu Raqwa, Mufraj's rising was not influenced by religious teaching, nor was it a serious threat to the Fatimids. He began to plunder the pilgrims, and planned to occupy Palestine to establish his family rule. In 400/1009, Imam al-Hakim appointed his general Yarkhtagin to Aleppo to suppress the rebellions, but Mufraj intercepted him at Askalan and raided. Mufraj sacked his materials and captured him. The rebels also occupied Ramla. Mufraj went to Hijaz and swore allegiance to Hasan bin Jafar (d. 430/1038), surnamed Abul Fatuh as an *amir*, and brought him to Ramla.

Thus, Mufraj dominated both in Palestine and Hijaz, and started coinage in the name of Abul Fatuh. Imam was much alarmed by these events in his state and tried to suppress the rebellion before it assumed serious proportions. He wrote a letter of remonstration to Mufraj and offered him a sum of 50,000 *dinars* in return for the safety of Yarkhtagin. Imam al-Hakim also threatened him with severe consequences if he harmed his general. Soon afterwards, the Fatimid general Yarkhtagin had been executed.

To discredit Abul Fatuh in Mecca and regain Hijaz, Imam al-Hakim communicated with another in Mecca, known as Ibn Abu Tayyib and helped him, resulting re-occupation of Hijaz by the Fatimid. Imam al-Hakim wrote to Mufraj, promising him estates and other gifts if he would cease

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from rebellion. Mufraj resolved to abandon Abul Fatuh, who returned to Hijaz. Meanwhile, Mufraj accepted the offer of Imam al-Hakim and took his money. He however retained his mastery over Palestine and continued to menace the peace and security. The pilgrims from Egypt could no longer travel to Hijaz to perform hajj as their caravans were used to be sacked. Imam al-Hakim was impelled to take field against Mufraj. In 404/1013, he sent 20,000 horsemen under Ali bin Falah, whom he invested the title *qutb ad-dawla* (magnate of the state), and ordered the chief of Damascus to join the campaign. Meanwhile, Mufraj died and his supporters scattered. Ali bin Falah captured Ramla and restored law and order.

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After suppression of revolts, Imam al-Hakim's administration became very liberal. The rebellions and the risings during his period had badly shaken the commercial life in Egypt by the fluctuation of the *dhiram*. In 395/1004, the market value of one *dinar* became equal to 26 *dhirams*. In 397/1006, the same problem occurred and one *dinar* valued equal to 34 *dhirams*. To cope with the monetary problem, new *dhirams* had been minted for circulation and the old ones withdrawn. The official value of a new *dhiram* was fixed at the rate 18 pieces to the *dinar*. The people were given three days to exchange the coins. This method controlled the monetary system to great extent.

In Egypt, the prices of merchandise, like units of measures and weight were not under direct control of the rule. This resulted price inflation and the people were at the mercy of the shopkeepers and merchants, profiteering high prices, therefore, Imam al-Hakim stabilized the units of weight and measure and fixed the price under government control. In 395/1004, an ordinance was issued to this effect, commanding the stabilization of the units and threatening those who deliberately mishandled them. In 397/1006, the prices of certain commodities were fixed. Severe punishment was inflicted upon the shopkeepers and merchants, who infringed these rules and also paraded in the streets who disobeyed these ordinances.

The relaxation in tax appears to have been an important feature in Imam al-Hakim's reformations. During the years of low Nile, which affected agriculture, the land-owners were exempted from paying imposts and taxes. Sometimes, certain areas were declared tax-free zones and at other times it covered the whole country. All the important commodities were relaxed from taxation along with local industries, such as silk, soap and refreshments.

The agriculture in Egypt used to be a target of the scanty of water during bad Nile and the loss of cattle from epidemics, therefore, Imam al-Hakim had taken important measures to reduce the problem as much as possible. He ordered water courses and troughs to be cleaned regularly. In 403/1013, he expended 15,000 *dinars* for the cleaning of the canal of Alexandria. He also employed Ibn al-Haytham, a famous engineer from Basra to solve the problem of low Nile. To ensure the supply of cattle for agriculture purpose, Imam al-Hakim ordered that cows should not be slaughtered except on occasions of religious festivals or if they were unfit to pull the plough. Ibn Taghri Birdi (d. 874/1470) writes in **al-Nujum al-Zahira fi Muluk Misr wa al-Qahira** (Cairo, 1929, 4:252) that, "His food laws like the slaughtering of safe and healthy cows, which was limited to perpetuate the cattle breed, and the killing of all dogs in the country were promulgated for sanitary purposes."

Imam al-Hakim also granted most of the state land to his subjects and it was not only officials and friends who benefited the facility, but any person who petitioned for his aids. He also curtailed the expenses of the palaces and confiscated most of the properties of his family members, notably of his mother and sisters and added them to the state treasury in 399/1009.

Imam al-Hakim's forbidding extravagant spending in entertainments when the Nile was exceptionally low and his fight against profiteering from high prices during the famine crisis are examples of sensible legislation for the public welfare. Ibn Taghri Birdi also discusses at some length Imam al-Hakim's charitable and university endowments; his leniency with taxation, depending on the ability of people and commensurate with the prosperity of Egypt over a particular year (op. cit., 4:180).

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There are also other noteworthy reforms of Imam al-Hakim in Egypt. "Nudity in public baths" says Makrizi in his **Itti'az al-Hunafa** (Cairo, 1948, p. 391), "was prohibited and people were ordered to wear towel around the waist." In 397/1006, Makrizi adds, a decree (*manshur*) was read, commanding the fixation of prices of bread, meat and other commodities. According to **The Renaissance of Islam** (Patna, 1937, p. 399), "The Caliph al-Hakim, who sought to restore the original Islam, enacted stringent measures against wine-drinking. When his Christian physician, Ibn Anastas prescribed wine and music for his melancholy, the people reverted with joy to the old vice. But the physician soon died and the Caliph became a yet greater opponent of alcohol. He even forbade the sale of raisins and honey and destroyed the casks wherein wine was kept."

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Makrizi further writes in his **al-Khitat** (2:285) that, "He enforced an Islamic law forbidding the making, selling and drinking of wine. A total and complete enforcement of this law never exercised by any Muslim caliph but Imam al-Hakim was determined to enforce it." In 402/1012, Imam al-Hakim had forbidden the use of beer under a decree (*manshur*), and according to Ibn Khallikan (3:450), "The usual law against wine was strictly enforced. Now he forbade the sale of dried raisins because they were used by some for making wine. He forbade their importation into the country, and ordered all found in stores to be destroyed, in consequence of which some 2340 boxes of dried raisins were burned, the value being put at 500 pieces of gold. He next forbade the sale of fresh grapes, exceeding four pounds at a time; in any markets, and strict prohibition was made against squeezing out the juice. The grapes found on sale were confiscated, and either trodden in the street or thrown into the Nile. The vine at Gizeh was cut down and oxen employed to tread the fruit into the mire. Orders were issued that the same was to be done throughout the provinces. But honey as well as grapes can be used in preparing fermented liquor, so the Caliph's seal was affixed to the stores of honey at Gizeh, and some 5051 jars of honey were broken and their contents poured into the Nile, as well as 51 cruises of date honey."

De Lacy O'Leary quotes an example in this context in **A Short History of the Fatimid Khilafat** (London, 1923, pp. 165-6) that a certain merchant had all his money invested in the prohibited fruit, and lost everything by the seizure and destruction of his goods. He appeared before the *qadi* and summoned Imam al-Hakim to appear and make good the destruction caused by his officials. The Caliph appeared to answer the charge preferred against him, the *qadi* treating him like any other citizen against whom complaint had been lodged. The merchant asked for compensation to the amount of 1000 pieces of gold. Imam al-Hakim in his defence said that the fruits destroyed were intended to be used in the preparation of drinks forbidden by the law of Holy Koran, but that if the merchant will answer that they were not intended for this purpose, but only to be eaten he was willing to pay their price. The merchant swore that the fruit was intended only for eating. He then received the money and gave the Caliph a formal receipt. When the case was concluded, the *qadi*, who had upto this point treated both parties as ordinary suitors, rose from his seat and gave the Caliph the salute customary at court. Imam al-Hakim admired the *qadi's* conduct, and made him valuable presents in recognition of his treatment of the case.

The historians concur that the life of frivolity in Egypt seems to have been against the principles of Imam al-Hakim, and according to Antaki (p. 202), "He banned the profession of singers and dancers in Egypt." He also forbade unveiled women to follow a funeral, prohibiting the weeping and howling and procession of mourning women with drums and pipes. Thus, the tearing of clothes, the blackening of faces and clipping of hair were forbidden and women, employed for lamenting the dead, were imprisoned. O'Leary writes that, "No doubt the nocturnal festivities of Cairo, well suited to the pleasure loving character of the Egyptians, led to many abuses, and so in 391/1001 a strict order was issued, forbidding women to go out of doors by night, and a little later this was followed by a general order prohibiting the opening of the shops by night." (op. cit., p. 133)

Imam al-Hakim always protected the Islamic interest like his ancestors. Ibn al-Muqaffa in **Tarikh Batarikat al-Kanisa al-Misriyya** (2:125) and Bar Hebraeus in **Chronographia** (London, 1923, p. 184) state that Imam al-Hakim threatened those who did not follow Islam and honoured those who did. Ibn Khallikan (3:451) writes that, "In 408/1017, al-Hakim forbade the kissing of the ground in his presence and annulled the prayer made for him in the *khutba* and in

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the writings addressed to him. Instead of that prayer, they were ordered to employ these words: Salutation to the Commander of the Faithful."

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In Egypt, Imam al-Hakim thus is reported to have removed the differences of the Shi'a and Sunni Muslims. Ibn Khallikan (3:450) writes that, "He gave orders that the persons who uttered curses against the Companions should be flogged and paraded ignominiously through the streets." Antaki (p. 195) writes that, "He publicly praised the Companions of the Prophet and commanded his subjects to do the same." In sum, the Sunni and Shi'a enjoyed toleration and equal rights. Many Sunni jurists were also employed in the Dar al-Hikmah and the appointment of a Sunni *qadi*, called Abul Abbas bin Awam Hanbali is best example in this context. In 400/1009, Imam al-Hakim also established a school of law offering instructions in the Malikite rite, whose incharge was Abu Bakr Antaki.

Imam al-Hakim restored peace and prosperity in the country, attracting the Muslims of Baghdad and Cordova to settle in Cairo. He brought the Fatimid rule to its zenith. Dr. G. Kheirallah writes in **Druze History** (Detroit, 1952, p.160) that, "During the life and reign of al-Hakim, the Fatimite Egypt reached its highest position of influence and prestige - no other state could then vie with Egypt for power, wealth or enlightenment; the Arabian art and crafts were at their zenith, and affluence and ease became the lot of the Egyptians". According to Antaki (d. 458/1065) in **Tarikh-i Antaki** (Beirut, 1909, p. 206), "Al-Hakim provided such kind of justice that his subjects had never known before. They slept in their homes secured in the possession of their properties." Ibn Ayyas (d. 930/1524) writes in **Bada'i al-Zuhur** (Cairo, 1896, 1:52) that, "His justice became the favourite theme of both writers of story and myth as well as poets. Much of their works, praising and picturing al-Hakim as the champion of justice, shows the impression his rule left on people's imaginations." Al-Hakim adopted severity in observance of Islamic law, which enormously helped to reduce crimes. Ibn al-Zafir (d. 613/1216) writes in **al-Duwal al-Munqatia** (p. 59) that, "At times of prayers, the shopkeepers would have their shops open and unguarded without fear of theft." Ibn Ayyas (op. cit., p. 54) reports a story of a man who lost his purse full of money in the street of Cairo, and when, after few days, he passed the same street, he found it untouched. None dare to touch it for fear of al-Hakim's punishment. There is an Egyptian fragment of Hebrew writing, evidently from Imam al-Hakim's period, praising and eulogizing his unparalled justice with sincerity, vide Dr. A. Neubauer's **Egyptien Fragment** (FQR, IX, pp. 24-6).

Dr. Sadik Assad writes in **The Reign of al-Hakim bi-Amrallah** (Beirut, 1974, p. 86) that, "Al-Hakim also built more mosques than any of his predecessors and perhaps, more than any other Muslim caliph." He extended his benefactions to all the existing mosques, and was responsible for the building of many more. The mosque near the Bab al-Futuh, commenced by his father in 380/990 had been left incomplete. Al-Hakim completed it and made it the second congregational mosque of Cairo, known as al-Anwar. Making no distinction between public treasury and personal funds, he made lavish gifts to the mosques of Fustat and Cairo. He furnished the mosque known as Hakim's Mosque with lamps, mats and other requirements at a cost of 5000 pieces of gold. He presented to the old mosque at Fustat a candelabrum with 1200 lights which weighed 100,000 *dhirams*. So huge was his grant that in carrying it to the mosque, the road had to be dug, and the upper part of the door had to be removed to carry it into the mosque. This present was taken in a procession with the commander-in-chief in the front with drums and trumpets and amidst shouts of *tehlil* (no might save God) and *takbir* (God is Great). He also presented the mosque 1290 copies of Holy Koran, some of which were written in letters of gold. He also built a huge mosque near the Muqattam hills and presented to it carpets, curtains and lamps. He also furnished various mosques the items like the copies of the Koran, silver lamps, mats, curtains etc." Makrizi also writes in **Itti'az** (p. 496) that Imam al-Hakim generously allocated 9220 *dhirams* each month for the upkeep of the mosques.

The Abbasid caliph Kadir billah (d. 422/1031) got his rule dwindling before his eyes. He saw Baghdad yielding its position of prestige as the seat of culture and science to Cairo, and he found himself a virtual prisoner of the Buwahids, while the Fatimid Imam al-Hakim was ruling powerfully and absolutely. Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) writes in **al-Muntazam fi Tarikh al-**

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Muluk (Hyderabad, 1840, 7:237) that, "The Shi'a of Iraq had looked to al-Hakim as their desired Caliph in 398/1008 in Baghdad, and during a quarrel with the Sunnis, they shouted slogans, Ya Hakim, Ya Mansur in favour of al-Hakim." In 401/1010, Mutamad ad-Dawla Qirwash bin Maqallid (d. 444/1052), the chief of the Uqayl tribe and governor of Mosul, Madain, Anbar and Kufa acknowledged the Fatimid Caliphate instead of the Abbasids, and started the Fatimid *khutba* and coinage. In the same year, Ali bin Mazid Asadi (d. 408/1018), the chief of the Asad tribe also proclaimed his loyalty to Imam al-Hakim and had the Fatimid *khutba* read in Hilla and the districts he governed.

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The Abbasid caliph Kadir billah alarmed over the prosperity of Egypt and growing influence of the Fatimids inside his empire, therefore, he attempted to combat with Imam al-Hakim by another cowardice tool. He gathered a number of Shi'a and Sunni theologians and jurists to his court in 402/1011 and ordered them to prepare a forged manifesto that the Fatimid claim of Alid descent was false. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) writes in **Muqaddimah** (tr. Franz Rosenthal, London, 1958, 1:45-6) that, "The judges in Baghdad eventually prepared an official statement denying the Alid origin (of the Fatimids). The statement was witnessed by a number of prominent men, among them the Sharif ar-Radi and his brother al-Murtada, and Ibn al-Bathawi. Among the religious scholars were Abu Hamid al-Isfarayini, al-Quduri, as-Saymari, Ibn al-Akfani, al-Abiwardi, the Shi'a jurist Abu Abdullah bin an-Numan, and other prominent Muslims in Baghdad. The event took place one memorable day in the year 402/1011 in the time of (the Abbasid caliph) al-Qadir. The testimony was based upon heresy, on what people in Baghdad generally believed. Most of them were partisans of the Abbasids who attacked the Alid origin (of the Fatimids). The historians reported the informations as they had heard it. They handed down to us just as they remembered it. However, the truth lies behind it. Al-Mutadid's letter concerning Ubaydallah (al-Mahdi) to Aghlabid in al-Qayrawan and the Midrarid in Sijilmasah, testifies most truthfully to the correctness of the origin (of the Fatimids) and proves it most clearly. Al-Mutadid was better qualified than anyone else to speak about the genealogy of the Prophet's house." Ibn Taghri Birdi (d. 874/1470) writes in his **al-Nujum al-Zahira fi Muluk wa al-Qahira** (Cairo, 1929, 4:236) that, "The Abbasid caliph hired theologians and paid them large sum of money to write books condemning the Fatimid cause and their doctrine." We have three accredited Sunni historians, Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), Abul Fida (1273-1331) and Makrizi (1363-1442), who were not under the pressure or influence of either the Abbasids or the Fatimids. These historians concur that the Fatimids of Egypt were the direct descendants of Ali and Fatima. The Abbasid false propaganda, however, discrediting the Fatimid lineage has been falsified through accredited sources and arguments.

Amid the surging splendour, Imam al-Hakim emerges as an unusual personality judged by any standard. He founded Dar al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom), also known as Dar al-Ilm (House of Knowledge) in 395/1004. The *majalis al-hikmah* were interrupted in 400/1010 for some reasons in Dar al-Hikmah. It was reopened very soon, but cancelled once again in 401/1010. It was again interrupted for the third time at the end of the year 405/1015 after the nomination of Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Awam as a chief *qadi*.

Sami Hamarneh writes in **Medicine and Pharmacy under the Fatimids** (cf. **Ismaili Contribution to Islamic Culture** ed. by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Tehran, 1977, p. 163) that, "It seems plausible to speculate that the generosity of al-Hakim towards scholars and scientists had attracted the migration to Fatimid Egypt of eminent figure, Abu Ali Muhammad bin al-Hasan bin al-Haytham (Latin Alhazen) of Basra in southern Iraq." Ibn al-Haytham (354-429/965-1039), the greatest physicist was born in Basra, and was originally appointed to a civil post at Basra. He was avidly consumed by the desire to learn mathematics and philosophy, for which he could not get spare time in his post, therefore, he feigned madness and was dismissed as a result from the post. Our informations about his pre-Egyptian days are deficient, but according to a few accounts of his life, it is known that he managed to leave Basra in order to proceed to Egypt, where he had been invited by the Fatimid Imam al-Hakim.

It must be known that in the summer following the rainy reason, the Nile river and the canals overflow with water, causing millions of tons of fertile silt, containing phosphoric acid, potash and

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nitrogen. But in the winter, the level of water fell down, making the cultivation of the crops impossible, and in annual inundation it used to cause devastation of life and property. With his brilliant mind, the famous physicist and the founder of the science of optics, Abu Ali Muhammad bin al-Hasan bin al-Haytham came to the conclusion in Iraq that if some of the surplus water available immediately after the rains, could be stored, not only could it be used in the dry season for more cultivation of land, but it would also help to prevent the periodic flood inflicting heavy damage. According to Ibn Abi Usaibia (d. 668/1270) in his **Uyn al-Anba fi tabakat al-Attiba** (2:91), Ibn al-Haytham had also claimed that, "Had I been in Egypt I could have done something to regulate the Nile, so that the people could derive benefit at its ebb and flow." Thus, he prepared a plan to build a three-way embankment dam near Aswan for harnessing the Nile waters, and sent his report to Imam al-Hakim. He even suggested for a site near Aswan where the river emerged from a gorge into the flat country. Haidar Bammate writes in **Muslim Contribution to Civilization** (Lahore, 1981, p. 21) that, "Al-Haytham was the first to advocate the construction of a dam at Aswan to raise the level of the Nile."

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Imam al-Hakim was deeply impressed when he received the outline of the project and sent one of his emissaries with adequate funds to Ibn al-Haytham in Basra and invited him to Cairo. He readily accepted the royal invitation and after a short stay in Cairo, he was sent up the river with a large sum of money and retinue of workers. He undertook the journey to Aswan, which is situated at a distance of over 400 miles to the south of Cairo as the crow flies. He inspected the site at Aswan and came to the conclusion that such a colossal scheme of works was not feasible under the working conditions. According to Ibn Abi Usaibia, "He saw the pyramids at first glance and became awed by the engineering and geometrical skills of the ancients. Had it been possible he thought, the ancient Egyptians must have done it before." (op. cit., 2:91). Having realized the enormous magnitude of the project, he failed to execute it with the technical means he had at his disposal. Instead therefore of undertaking the start-up of the projected dam, he returned to Cairo and confessed to Imam al-Hakim his sheer inability to go ahead with the proposed plan.

Imam al-Hakim assigned him some office pertaining to revenue, but he is said to have feigned madness, and retired to a place near al-Azhar university. Different stories have been advanced to discredit the personality of Imam al-Hakim in this context. Prof. Abdul Ghafur writes in **Ibn al-Haitham** (cf. **Ibn al-Haitham**, Karachi, 1970, pp. 111-2) that, "From this, it should be obvious that, even after Ibn al-Haitham's inability to go ahead with the plan for construction of the dam at Aswan, al-Hakim had considerable respect for Ibn al-Haitham. It might be that there were monetary difficulties involved in the implementation of the scheme or some other snag. However, the reputation of Ibn al-Haitham remain unscathed in this affair. The plea of insanity was not new to Ibn al-Haitham. He had used this subterfuge once before at Basra. It is therefore plausible to assume that he adopted this ruse in order to devote himself to studies. Qifti, Baihiqi and Ibn Abi Usaibia unanimously held that Ibn al-Haitham was a self-contented person and devoid of avarice or worldly self-aggrandizement."

Baihiqi however wrongly narrates in his **Timat al-Sawan al-Hikmat** that Ibn al-Haytham steathily left Cairo at the dead night and lived in Syria. This narration contradicts the established fact that he lived in Cairo till his death. The story of the flight of Ibn al-Haytham from Cairo for fear of execution by Imam al-Hakim is the fabrication of the historians. Had he known of his murder, he would have fled from Aswan and never came to Cairo. He however spent the last 19 years of his life in scientific pursuits and experimental research under the shadow of the domes and arches of al-Azhar university, and composed almost 209 books on mathematics, astronomy, physics, philosophy and medicine of which the most celebrated is his **Kitab al-Manazir** (treatise on optics), which was translated into Latin by Witelo in 1270 and published by Frederick Risner in 1572 at Basel. This was the first comprehensive treatise on optics in the world and immensely influenced the writings of Witelo, Peckham, Roger Bacon, Leonardo de Vinici and John Kepler. He is the first to have discussed the anatomy of the eye. He also discussed the propagation of light and colours, optic illusions and reflection, with experiments for testing the angles of incidence and reflection. Theorically he had almost discovered magnifying lenses through his experiments, which came into existence in Italy three centuries later. For the first time Ibn al-Haytham offered

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a correct explanation for the apparent increase in the size of the sun and the moon when near the horizon. His another remarkable achievement is his employment of the camera obscura.

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Another notable figure was Ali bin Yunus, the great mathematician and astronomer, who invented pendulum and the sun-dial, for whom Imam al-Hakim had the observatory built on Jabal al-Muqattam.

According to **Encyclopaedia of World Art** (Rome, 1958, 5:367) that, "Rice correctly read the Arabic text carved on it, which does not simply banal good wishes to the owner of the ewer as was previously thought, but says that the ewer was made for the personal use of al-Hakim's commander."

It will be further interesting to note that Abul Kassim Ammar bin Ali al-Mausili was the most important eye-surgeon in Cairo, and acquired great prestige under the patronage of Imam al-Hakim. He compiled **al-Muntakhab fi ilm al-Ayn wa Mudawatiha bi'l Adwiya wal Hadid** in 400/1010. It deals the anatomy and physiology of the eye, its diseases and treatment by drugs and surgery. To avoid the dangers of using a breakable glass tube referred to in Greek writings, Ammar invented a hollowed metallic needle used successfully in cataract operations.

Imam al-Hakim had installed an astronomical observatory on Jabal al- Muqattam, near Cairo for Ibn Younus. According to Ibn Khallikan, Imam al-Hakim went out late in the night of 27th Shawal, 411/February 13, 1021 to Jabal al-Muqattam and did not return to the palace. A tracking party was sent out, who found an ass on the top of the hill with its forelegs hacked off. Blood marks on the ground led to a spot, where they found Imam al-Hakim's clothes pierced by daggers and buttoned up, and as such his death was officially declared on 10th Zilhaja, 411/April 4, 1021. The Druzes however believed that Imam al-Hakim did not die but disappeared, anticipating his return on dooms-day. Makrizi (2:290) quotes one other tradition about Imam al-Hakim's death on the authority of Abul Mahsin that in 415/1025, a man from Imam Hussain's family had been arrested after raising up rebellion in the southern part of upper Egypt. He confessed that it was he who had killed Imam al-Hakim. He said that there were four accomplices of the crime, and that they afterwards fled to different parts. He also showed a piece of cotton with which he had been clothed.

Imam al-Hakim died at the age of 36 years and 7 months after the Imamate and Caliphate of 25 years and 1 month. He had two sons, al-Harith (395-400/1004-1009) and Ali Abul Hasan, surnamed az-Zahir. He had also a daughter, Sit al-Misr (d. 455/1063).

ZAHIR (411-427/1021-1036), 17TH IMAM

He was born on 20th Ramzan, 395/June 4, 1005. His name was Ali Abul Hasan, or Abu Ma'd, surnamed *az-Zahir la-azaz dinallah* (Assister in exalting the religion of God). His mother Amina was the daughter of Abdullah, the son of Imam al-Muizz. He acceded on the throne of Fatimid Caliphate and Imamate on 411/1021 at the age of 16 years. On the occasion of his coronation, a special payment in excess (*fadl*) of 20 *dinars* was granted to each soldier.

A black eunuch Midad began his career in the service of Sit al-Mulk, the aunt of Imam az-Zahir. She employed him as a teacher of Imam az-Zahir. On Friday, the 18th Safar, 415/May 1, 1024, Imam az-Zahir invested Midad the honorific title and named him Abul Fawaris. Later on, Midad was assigned the administration of the affairs of the soldiers according to a long edict read publicly in the palace.

Imam az-Zahir began his career under the tutelage of his aunt, Sit al-Mulk (the lady of the state), also known as Sit al-Nasr, who was born in 359/980. During the first four years of Imam az-

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Zahir's rule, the whole power was in the hands of his aunt. The personnel of Sit al-Mulk in the administration included both men and women. Abul Abbas Ahmad bin a-Maghribi, for example, served as her agent, who was a man of laudable character and had already served the mother of Sit al-Mulk in the same capacity. She also employed a slave girl of her mother, named Takarrub, was her confidante. She also served as her informant and handled the petitions submitted to her. It is said that at the beginning of her regency, she managed to summon Abdul Rahman bin Ilyas bin Ahmad, the great-grandson of Imam al-Mahdi and the cousin of Imam al-Hakim, who had hatched rebellion against the Fatimids at Damascus, and is reported to have made his contact with the Jarrahids of Palestine to help him in his action. Sit al-Mulk made *vizir* Khatir al-Mulk, Ammar bin Muhammad write a letter to Abdul Rahman. He had been arrested in Cairo and imprisoned for some four years, then fell ill and died just three days before Sit al-Mulk herself died. Thus, she is reported to have wielded great influence over the masses and directly participated in the state affairs, and remained quite influential until her death in 416/1026. Ibn Khallikan (8:130) writes that, "She showed exceptional ability, especially in legal matters, and made herself loved by the people." During these four years, the chief ministers changed in quick succession and thus the administration could not acquire stability. After the death of Sit al-Mulk, the principle power passed into the hands of a trio from among the court nobles, who paid daily visit to the Imam for getting decision on all important matters.

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It has been hitherto discussed the closure of the *majalis al-hikmah* during the period of Imam al-Hakim. But it was evidently reopened by his successor. He conferred the office of the *qadi* and the mission in the royal palace (*bab al-khalifa*) to Qadi Kassim bin Abdul Aziz bin Muhammad bin an-Noman in 418/1027, ordering to take charge of the mission and the proper guidance of the readings of the *majalis al-hikmah* and the spread of the science of *tawil* among the followers. He also sent an edict in this context to all his followers and also ordered the *da'is* to read it out explicitly to the faithful in their respective regions. According to **Uyun'l-Akhbar** (6:315), the edict of Imam az-Zahir of 5th Shaban, 417/September 21, 1026 reads:- "The gate of wisdom was open until our Lord al-Hakim bi-Amrillah thought it right to close it because of the prevailing circumstances and on political grounds (*bi-siyasti'l jumhur*). But now, continues the edict, the conditions that Commander of the Faithful has ordered the chief *da'i*, Kassim bin Abdul Aziz bin Muhammad bin an-Noman to open the gate of wisdom to those who long for it, and to read the *majalis* again in the palace of the Caliphs as has been customary there before."

Meanwhile, a terrible famine broke out in Egypt as a result of a series of bad Niles, and the resultant distress lasted all through 416/1026 and 417/1027. In many cases the starving villages took to brigandage. Even the pilgrims on their way through Egypt were attacked. Regulations were passed to prevent the slaughter of cattle. The camels were scarce as many were killed because it was impossible to provide them with food, and poultry could hardly be procured. The royal treasury was practically depleted, for it was impossible to collect taxes.

Imam az-Zahir once on that perilous time was passing through Fustat when going to one of his palaces. Everywhere he encountered starving, shouting people who cried out: "Hunger, O' Amir al-mominin! hunger. Neither your father nor your grandfather did such things to us. In the name of God, to God we entrust our affair." These cries reflected the feeling that the regime had mishandled the situation. The Imam took its serious and arranged to distribute food for them, and assured the people to take actions. On the same day, Ibn Dawwas, the market inspector was summoned to the palace; he was accused of causing the famine and blamed for bringing the town to the verge of violent outburst. The people rebuked him and said: "A document in your handwriting is evidence on your part, which serves against you that you undertook upon yourself to provide the town with bread and wheat until the time of the new harvest." Following this conversation, the millers were permitted to buy wheat from granaries (*makaazin*) at a fixed price of one *tillis* (one *tillis* is equivalent to 67.5 kg.) for 2.5 *dinars*, and the price of a load of flour was determined at 4 *dinars*. The price of bread was fixed at two and half *ratls* for *dhiram*. The prices established by the market inspector were considerably lower than those of the free market. The same was applied to bread, following the sealing of the granaries, two ratls of black bread were sold for 1.5 *dhiram*. These swift measures brought great deal of relief. Further, punitive actions were taken by the market inspectors against several flour merchants (*qammahun*), including a

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prominent member of the trade. Later in a year, however, there was a good inundation, called *ziyadat al-nil* (the plentitude of the Nile) and this restored plenty, so that the country was once more under normal conditions and order was restored.

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In 418-9/1028-9, Imam az-Zahir was able to make a treaty with the Greek emperor, Costantine III. It was agreed that the Fatimid Caliph should be prayed for in the *khutba* in every mosque in the Byzantine dominions, and permission was granted for the restoration of the mosque at Constantinople, which had been ruined in retaliation for the destruction of the church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem. Imam az-Zahir on his part agreed to permit the rebuilding of the church at Jerusalem.

In the meantime, the attacks which the Sicilian launched on the Byzantine coasts were reinforced by the Fatimids. The Byzantine force commanded by the general George Maniaces was badly defeated. In his negotiations with the Fatimid Imam az-Zahir in 423/1032, the emperor Romanus III Argyrus (968-1034) however expressly demanded that the Fatimids should not aid the Sahib Sikilliyya in the campaign against Byzantine.

Sicily became virtually independent of the Fatimids. The Kalbid governors confined themselves to accepting retrospective investiture from Cairo. They have cemented their close ties with the Zirids, whose suzerainty the Sicilian recognized in 427/1036. Until the time of Imam az-Zahir and even under his successor, the Sicilian coins however bore the name of the Fatimid Caliph.

The Fatimid power in Syria was seriously impugned at the time of Imam az-Zahir's accession, but it was soon altered by the ability and enterprise of Anushtagin ad-Dizbiri. His first important action was against Saleh bin Mirdas, the Arab chieftain who had taken Aleppo from Murtada and had now established himself as an independent prince.

Ibn Hawshab had formed an Ismaili state in 268/882 in Yamen. Long after his death, the political power slipped away from the hands of the Ismailis, but their mission continued actively. During the period of Imam az-Zahir, the headship of the Yamenite mission had come to be vested in a certain *da'i* Suleman bin Abdullah al-Zawahi, a learned and influential person residing in the mountainous region of Haraz. He made a large conversion and wished to re-establish the political power of the Ismailis in Yamen. It is said that a certain Hamdani chieftain, named Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi, the son of the *qadi* of Haraz, once came to lead the pilgrim caravans to Mecca, and had learnt much about Ismaili doctrines from Suleman and espoused Ismailism. Ali took a leading part in the mission works in Yamen and became the assistant of Suleman, who chose him as his successor. Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi generated his close contact with Imam az-Zahir and the mission headquarters in Cairo.

In 429/1038, during the period of Imam al-Mustansir billah, Ali bin Muhammad captured Mount Masar in Haraz to the north of Yamen, and fortified it, whom he made his centre. This marked the foundation of the Sulayhid dynasty, which ruled over Yamen as a vassal of the Fatimids for almost a century until 532/1138. He obtained support from the Hamdani, Humayri and other petty tribes of Yamen and instituted the Fatimid *khutba* everywhere.

We have discussed previously that Fatik, the governor of Aleppo had declared himself as an independent ruler on the eve of the death of Imam al-Hakim. Later on, Fatik admitted his mistakes and apologized from Imam az-Zahir and Sit al-Mulk. In 413/1022, Badr, the commander of the stronghold of Aleppo had killed Fatik. In the following year, az-Zahir expelled Badr from Aleppo and appointed Abdullah bin Ali bin Jafar al-Katami as the governor of Aleppo and Safi ad-Dawla to administer the command of the stronghold.

During the later part of Imam az-Zahir's rule, the Fatimid influence had become supreme in Palestine and Syria, save only in the few northern districts which remained subject to the Greek empire. It seemed indeed to be the triumph of the Fatimids.

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In Cairo, Abu Sa'ad Ibrahim (d. 440/1048) was a famous Jewish dealer in very rare and precious things and made long journey to acquire them. Imam az-Zahir used to be a frequent customer of Abu Sa'ad, from whom he bought antiques for his personal collections. The Fatimids made great contribution in the rock-crystal works in various forms, mostly developed during the time of Imam az-Zahir, such as ewers, bottles, cups, saucers, boxes, chessmen and flasks of different shapes. One of these interesting piece is preserved in crescent shape work in the Germanisches National Museum in Nurnberg. It was originally used as an ornament for one of the horses of Imam az-Zahir, whose name is inscribed on it. There are also another rock-crystal mugs in the collections of Lourvre, Venice, Vienna and Prague; belonging to the period of Imam az-Zahir.

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In 421/1030 and again in 424/1033, Imam az-Zahir rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, which had collapsed following an earthquake. He was also responsible for rebuilding the Aqsa Mosque and the repair of its mosaics.

In 427/1036, Imam az-Zahir was detained some time by sickness. He was taken to Maks, then the port of Cairo, where he died on the 15th of Shaban, 427/June 13, 1036, leaving the Caliphate and Imamate to his son, al-Mustansir, then a child of seven years of age.

MUSTANSIR BILLAH I (427-487/1036-1095), 18TH IMAM

He was born in Cairo on 16th Jamada II, 420/July 2, 1029, who eight months afterwards was declared to succeed his father. His name was Ma'd Abu Tamim, surnamed *al-Mustansir billah* (Imploring the help of God). He ascended on 15th Shaban, 427/June 13, 1036 at the age of 7 years. During the early years, the state affairs were administered by his mother. His period of Caliphate lasted for 60 years, the longest of all the caliphs, either in Egypt or elsewhere in Islamic states.

Ali bin Ahmad Jarjarai, an able *vizir*, whose period was one of the prosperity in Egypt, died in 436/1044. He was followed by Ibn al-Anbari and Abu Mansur Sadaqa, but none of them was competent. In 442/1050, there came forward a capable *vizir* Abu Muhammad Hasan bin Abdur Rehman Yazuri, who held the office for 8 years, and was an earnest reformer. He was followed by about 40 *vizirs* one after another during 15 years (450-466/1058-1073), but none equated him, because they squandered the royal treasury.

Between 457/1065 and 464/1072, the famine made the condition of Egypt from bad to worse. Meanwhile, in 454/1062 and again in 459/1067, the struggle between the Turkish and Sudanese soldiery deteriorated into open warfare, ending in a victory for the Turks and their Berber allies. The Berbers in lower Egypt deliberately aggravated the distress by ravaging the country, destroying the embankments and canals, and seeking every way to reduce the capital and the neighbouring districts by sheer starvation. Makrizi sees in this incident the beginning of the crisis in Egypt, which he refers by the appellations, disorder (*fitna*), civil war (*al-shidda al-mashhura*), corruption of state (*fasad ad-dawla*) and days of calamity and dearth (*ayyam al-shidda wal ghala*).

In Imam al-Mustansir's stable where there had been ten thousand animals there were now only three thin horses, and his escort once fainted from hunger as it accompanied him through the streets. As long as the calamity lasted, Imam al-Mustansir alone possessed a horse, and, when he rode out, the courtiers followed on foot, having no beast to carry them. The condition of the country deteriorated with the protracted famine that followed by plague, and the whole districts were absolutely denuded of population and house after house lay empty.

Meanwhile, the Turkish mercenaries had drained the treasury, the works of art and valuables of all sorts in the palace were sold to satisfy their demands; often they themselves were the

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purchasers at merely nominal prices and sold the articles again at a profit. Emeralds valued at 300,000 *dinars* were bought by one Turkish general for 500 *dinars*, and in one fortnight of the year 460/1068 articles to the value of 30,000,000 *dinars* were sold off to provide pay for the Turks. The precious library which had been rendered available to the public and was one of the objects for which many visited Cairo was scattered, the books were torn up, thrown away, or used to light fires. At length, the Turks began fighting amongst themselves. Nasir ad-Dawla, the Turkish general of the Fatimid army, had attacked the city which was defended by the rival faction of the Turkish guard and, after burning part of Fustat and defeating the defenders, he entered as conqueror. When he reached the palace, he found Imam al-Mustansir resided in rooms, which had been stripped bare, waited on by only three slaves, and subsisting on two loaves, which were sent him daily by the daughters of Ibn Babshand. The victorious Turks dominated Cairo, held the successive *vizirs* in subjection, treated Imam al-Mustansir with contempt, and used their power to deplete the treasury by enhancing their pay to nearly twenty times its former figure. After this victory over the unhappy city, Nasir ad-Dawla became so overbearing and tyrannical in his conduct that he provoked even his own followers, and so at length he was assassinated in 466/1074. But this only left the city in a worse condition than ever, for it was now at the mercy of the various Turkish factions, which behaved no better than troops of brigands.

Mention should be made of the Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-1055), who had maintained a friendly relation with the Imam and had provided Egypt with wheat after the above mentioned famine.

At this desperate juncture when these troubles were brewing, Imam al-Mustansir was roused to action and sent a message to Badr al-Jamali, the then governor of Acre, inviting him to come to Egypt and take control. Badr al-Jamali responded swiftly. Originally an Armenian slave of the Syrian *amir*, Jamaluddin bin Ammar, he had a successful career as soldier and governor in Syria. His Armenian soldiers were loyal. Sailing from Acre in the mid-winter, he landed at Damietta and entered Cairo on 28th Jamada I, 466/January 29, 1074. Badr al-Jamali took the charge and dealt the state affairs efficiently. The swift and energetic actions of Badr al-Jamali brought peace and security to Egypt, and even measure of prosperity. The annual revenue was increased from about 2,000,000 to 3,00,000 *dinars*. It is true that his efforts were greatly assisted by the fact that the year 466/1074 saw an exceptionally good Nile, so that prosperity and abundance once more reigned through the land. Badr al-Jamali was invested the triple title, viz. *Amir al-Juyush* (commander of the army), *Badi al-Duat* (director of the missionaries) and the *Vizir*.

The foremost priority given by the Imam was to rebuild the library devastated by the Turks. De Lacy O'Leary writes in **A Short History of the Fatimid Khalifate** (London, 1923, p. 207) that, "It is interesting to note that the Khalif set himself to the formation of a new library at Cairo as one of his first tasks; it helps us to realize that the Shi'ites were then as always the friends of learning."

In 447/1055, the Turk, Tughril Beg was recognized in Baghdad as the sultan and lieutenant of the Abbasid caliph. He drove away the Iranian soldiers from Baghdad to Syria. They assembled round Abu Harith al-Basasari, who was propagating the Fatimid mission. Meanwhile, Ebrahim Niyal rebelled in Mosul against Tughril Beg, who himself set out to crush the revolt. The absence of Tughril Beg from Baghdad gave a chance to al-Basasari to capture Baghdad, which he did successfully in 450/1058 and recited the Fatimid *khutba* in the cathedral mosque of Baghdad. He also sent the royal throne, robes, pulpit and the staff to Imam al-Mustansir in Cairo. The expelled Abbasid caliph took refuge with an Arab *amir* for one year.

After subduing the rising of his brother, Tughril Beg turned back to Baghdad with a large army. When he reached near Baghdad, al-Basasari did not come into confrontation, and began to evacuate the city on other side with his close associates. Tughril Beg thus entered the city without any opposition and reinstated the Abbasid caliphate after a year on 6th Zilkada, 451, December 14, 1059. He sent a detachment to pursue al-Basasari, who was slain in the ensuing fighting.

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Maghrib was the original base of the Fatimids, whose chief in the time of Imam al-Mustansir was al-Muizz bin Badis, the fourth Zirid ruler. He was a Malikite and persecuted the Shiites. It is also related that the relations between him and the Fatimid *vizir* were strained, whereupon in 436/1044, al-Muizz bin Badis proclaimed Malikism in Maghrib, and recited the Abbasid *khutba* from 440/1048, resulting the whole Maghrib gone away from the Fatimid occupation in 442/1050.

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It is related that al-Muizz bin Badis returned briefly later on in 446/1055 to the allegiance of the Fatimids. In the meantime, the *vizir* Yazuri had convinced Imam al-Mustansir that he would punish the disloyal al-Muizz bin Badis. Thus, the *vizir* encouraged a number of Bedouin tribes to advance towards Maghrib. The Bedouins at the command of Banu Hilal and Banu Sulaym, took possession of Barqa and proceeded into the territories of the Maghrib. They inflicted defeat to the Zirids in 443/1052 and pillaged the towns and gained rich booty. These Bedouins, being reinforced by new arrivals, gradually penetrated Maghrib, whose operation is known as the Hilali Invasion. In 449/1057, al-Muizz bin Badis had to evacuate his capital, Kairwan and sought refuge in Mahdiya, then governed by his son, Tamim bin al-Muizz (454-501/1062-1108). In sum, the Zirids were divided into petty rules in Maghrib. The last Zirid ruler, al-Hasan bin Ali was driven out of Mahdiya in 543/1148 by Roger II, the Sicilian emperor.

The Karakhanid dynasty sprang from the ruling house of the Karluk Turks, originally belonged to the steppes of Central Asia, and whose founder was Satuk Bughra Khan. He embraced Islam and assumed the Islamic name Abdul Karim. He reigned from Kashghar and Talas over the western wing of his people. His grandson Hasan Bughra Khan occupied for a while the Samanid capital of Bukhara, which was taken over by Ilig Nasr of Ozkend in 389/999. The Fatimid *da'is* had continued their mission in Bukhara, Samarkand and western Farghana. In 436/1045, a bulk of the converted Ismailis, who recognized the Imamate of Imam al-Mustansir, had been killed in the territories of the Karkhanid rule, impelling the *da'is* to adopt strict *taqiya*.

Hasan bin Sabbah was also a renowned Ismaili *da'i*. He came in Egypt in 471/1078 and had his audience with Imam al-Mustansir. He stayed 18 months in Cairo, and being ascertained the name of Imam al-Nizar as the successor personally from Imam al-Mustansir, he quitted Cairo and reached Ispahan in 473/1081 and thence proceeded to Qazwin, and took possession of the fort of Alamut in 483/1090 and founded Nizari Ismaili state.

In Yamen, Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi had established the Sulayhid rule and introduced the Fatimid *khutba*. In 450/1058, he succeeded to expel the Zaidis from San'a, and made it his capital. In 452/1060, he captured Zabid after killing Sa'd bin Najah, the founder of the Najahid dynasty and appointed his brother-in-law, Asad bin Shihab as the governor of Zabid. In 454/1062, he conquered Adan, where he allowed Banu Ma'n to rule for sometime as tributaries of the Sulayhids. Later, in 476/1083, the Sulayhids granted the governorship of Adan to two Hamdani brothers, Abbas and Masud bin Karam, who founded the Ismaili dynasty of the Zurayids in Adnan from 476/1083 to 569/1173. Ali bin Muhammad subjugated all of Yamen in 455/1063 and also extended his influence from Mecca to Hazarmaut. Umara bin Ali al-Hakami (d. 569/1174) writes in **Tarikh-i Yamen** (tr. Henry C. Kay, London, 1892, pp. 24-5) that, "None of its plains or its hills, of its lands or of its waters remained unsubdued. No parallel case can be found of so rapid a conquest, either in the days of ignorance or in the days of Islam." One of the greatest achievements of Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi was his success in establishing peace in Mecca on behalf of Imam al-Mustansir.

In 454/1062, Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi desired to meet Imam al-Mustansir, therefore, he sent Lamak bin Malik al-Hammadi, the chief *qadi* of Yamen to Cairo to discuss his prospective visit. In 454/1062, Nasir ad-Dawla had begun to ravage Egypt, therefore, *qadi* Lamak had to stay with al-Muayyad at the Dar al-Hikmah. Lamak remained in Cairo for five years and at length he had an audience with the Imam. On the other hand, Ali bin Muhammad set out on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 459/1067 at the head of 2000 horsemen of whom 160 were the members of his household. Unfortunately, he was killed with a number of his relatives in a surprise attack by the sons of Sa'd bin Najah in reprisal of his father's death. His son Ahmad al-Mukarram was declared

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the head of Yamen by Imam al-Mustansir. The rule which Ali bin Muhammad al-Sulayhi founded would have fallen to the ground if his son Ahmad al-Mukarram had not come to its rescue and restored it.

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In one of the rare extant letters from Yamen to Imam al-Mustansir, Ahmad al-Mukarram, after giving an account of the death of his father and the following events, reports that the envoys of the *da'i* of India have brought him a letter, asking that permission be granted to them to pass from verbal propaganda to the use of force. It shows that there were preparations for a rising on the western coast of India, presumably in Gujrat, ruled by the then Hindu Chaulukya dynasty and establish there a Fatimid enclave. In his letter dated 461/1068, the Imam replied to the question of the *da'i* Yousuf bin Hussain and left it to him to judge whether the plan was feasible. Nothing seems to have come of it. In 468/1075, Yousuf bin Hussain died in India, therefore, Ahmad al-Mukarram was commissioned to choose his successor. Yousuf's son Ahmad was proposed by him, which the Imam agreed and sent the appointment letter, adding that the country in question, i.e., the administration of its mission, was in the charge of the Sulayhid, who was also ordered to make some arrangements for Oman, which had at that time no mission. In 469/1076, the Sulayhid is charged with the government of the city of Oman. In 476/1083, the Sulayhid suggested appointment of Marzuban bin Ishaq in India and Ibrahim bin Ismail in Oman, which Imam al-Mustansir billah agreed. In 481/1088, Marzuban died and his son Ahmad was recommended. In Oman, Ibrahim turned to commerce and neglected the mission, thus Hamza was recommended to succeed him. Ahmad al-Mukarram died in 484/1091 and his wife Sayyida Hurrat al-Malika Arwa (477-532/1084-1138) then began to govern on behalf of Mukarram's minor son, Ali Abd al-Mustansir. When he too died, Sayyida Arwa took up the reins of administration of the state and mission, and remained loyal to Imam al-Mustansir. She however supported the Mustalian line after the death of Imam al-Mustansir.

The Fatimid *vizir* Badr al-Jamali died in 487/1095, and was succeeded by his son, al-Afdal as *vizir*. The administration of Badr al-Jamali was especially associated with a great development of building and with the construction of new walls and gates round Cairo.

The longest Caliphate of Muslim history for 60 years and 4 months closed with the death of Imam al-Mustansir on the 18th Zilhaja, 487/January 6, 1095 at the age of 67 years and 5 months.

NIZAR I (487-490/1095-1097), 19TH IMAM

Abu Mansur al-Nizar, surnamed *al-Mustapha al-dinillah* (the chosen for God's religion), was born in Cairo on 437/1045. He assumed the Imamate on 18th Zilhaja, 487/January 6, 1095 at the age of 50 years. He had been however proclaimed as a successor in 480/1087 before the notables in the court by his father. His participation in state affairs is scant. In 454/1062, during the perilous period of Egypt, Imam al-Mustansir had however sent him to the port of Damietta with the Fatimid army to execute few assignments.

The name *Nizar* is a Persian word, means *thin, slim, slender, lean, spare* or *weak*. As it is said *kilki nizar* means *a slender reed or pen*. The Iranian name tends to the fact that Imam al-Mustansir had perceived the forthcoming bifurcation in the Ismailis, and that his successor would be supported in the Iranian society more than the Arabian territories. He had chosen the name *Nizar* to cohere him and his descendants with the Iranian culture. The cause of the Nizarid was also supported by the Iranian missionaries, notably Hasan bin Sabbah, Nasir Khusaro, Abdul Malik bin Attash etc.

When Hasan bin Sabbah was yet in Cairo in 471/1078, De Lacy O'Leary writes in **A Short History of the Fatimid Khalifate** (London, 1923, p. 209) that, "At the time, it appears, the court was divided into two factions over the question of the succession, the one party holding to the Khalif's elder son Nizar, the other to a younger son named Musta'li. In one place Nasir-i

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Khusaro says that the Khalif told him that his elder son Nizar was to be his heir, and the succession of the older son would be in accordance with the doctrines of the sect as already proved by their adherence to Ismail, the son of Jafar as-Sadiq. But Badr and the chief officials were on the side of the younger son Musta'li."

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Badr al-Jamali thus expected the succession of Musta'li but he died in 487/1095, a month before the death of Imam al-Mustansir. The latter appointed Lawun Amin ad-Dawla as a new *vizir*, but after few days, al-Afdal, the son of Badr al-Jamali managed to obtain office of vizirate when the Imam was almost on death-bed, and also became *amir al-juyush* (commander of the army). After the death of Imam al-Mustansir, the year 487/1095 marks the triumph of vizirial prerogative over caliphal authority in the structure of the Fatimid empire. Al-Afdal however, was afraid of being deposed by Imam al-Nizar, so he conspired to remove him. There is one other story purporting his enmity with Imam al-Nizar. If the story quoted by Charles Francois Defremery (1822-1883) in **Histoire des Ismaeliens ou Batiniens de la Perse** (JA, ser. 5, XV, 1860, p. 154), is genuine, it illustrates how a little, rather a trifling thing determines great events. Al-Afdal, so the account goes, was once mounted on his horse in the passage leading from the golden gate to the entrance of the palace when Nizar passed by. Al-Afdal did not dismount to honour the Prince according to the royal custom. Nizar called out, "Get down from your horse, O'Armenian slave! How impolite you are?" Dr. Zahid Ali is of an opinion that it was a bone of contention and since that day, al-Afdal became an enemy of Nizar, vide **Tarikh-i Fatimiyyin Misr** (Karachi, 1963, p. 294).

Makrizi also quotes the above incident, vide **Itti'az** (p.512). The phrases *al-adab fil salam* and *adab al-khidma* designated in the broadest sense in the protocol (*adab*) to be observed in the Fatimid court. It was the custom for the *vizirs* to ride into the palace through the golden gate (*bab al-dhahab*) and dismount at a designated spot, called "the passage of the vizirate" (*maqta al-vizara*), but al-Afdal exceeded the limit and treated impolitely with Imam al-Nizar.

Aiming to retain the power of the state in his own hands, al-Afdal favoured the candidacy of Imam al-Mustansir's youngest son, Abul Kassim Ahmad, surnamed Musta'li, who would entirely depend upon him. Al-Musta'li was about 20 years old, and already married to al-Afdal's daughter. Al-Afdal moved swiftly, and on the day following Imam al-Mustansir's death, he placed the young prince on the throne with the title of al-Musta'li-billah. He quickly obtained for al-Musta'li the allegiance of the notables of the court. He also took favour of Imam al-Mustansir's sister, who was prepared to declare a fabricated story that Imam al-Mustansir had changed the *nass* in favour of Musta'li at very last hour in presence of the *qadi* of Egypt, but the cause of change of *nass* was not given at all. Marshall Hodgson writes in **The Order of Assassins** (Netherland, 1955, p. 63) that, "Nizar's right to the Egyptian succession by sectarian principles was very strong. The Sunni historians assume him to have been designated heir-apparent. This "first nass" would clearly give him claim to Ismaili allegiance against any later nominee on the analogy of Ismail himself, whose claim could not be set aside for his brother Musa."

The Egyptian historian, Nuwayri (d. 732/1332) writes in **Nihayat al-Arab** that, "When al-Mustansir billah died, his son al-Nizar, who was the *wali'l-ahd*, took his seat on the throne and desired homage to be done to himself; but al-Afdal refused, through dislike to al-Nizar, and he had a meeting with a member of *amirs* and men of rank, to whom he said, that Nizar was come to the age of manhood, and they could not hope to escape his severity; so the best thing to be done was to do homage to his youngest brother Musta'li. This plan was approved of by all except Muhammad Ibn Massal al-Maliki". The extant sources recount that al-Afdal hastened to proclaim Musta'li and on the next day, al-Afdal sent for the other sons of Imam al-Mustansir, biding them to come quickly. Imam al-Nizar and his brothers, Abdullah and Ismail as soon as entered the palace, and saw the younger brother seated on the throne, at which they were filled with indignation. Nuwayri writes in **Nihayat al-Arab** that al-Afdal said to them: "Go forward and kiss the earth in the presence of God and of our lord al-Must'ali billah! Do him homage, for it is he whom the Imam al-Mustansir billah has declared as his successor to the caliphate." To this al-Nizar answered: "I would rather be cut in pieces than do homage to one younger than myself, and moreover I possess a document in the handwriting of my father by which he names me successor, and I shall go and bring it." He withdrew from the court in haste.

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It implies that Imam al-Nizar and his brothers were summoned in the palace under usual manner. He must have brought the written document with him, had he known the enthronement of Must'ali. The significant feature of Musta'li was that he was silent on the whole, and himself did not ask his brothers to pay him homage. It was only al-Afdal to deal the proceeding. Musta'li was planned to enthrone with the firm hold of the *vizir*. According to **Religion in the Middle East** (London, 1969, 2:321) ed. by A.J. Arberry, "Both Ibn al-Athir and Ibn Khaldun agree that Nizar was the duly appointed heir apparent whose claims were overlooked by the energy and diplomacy of al-Afdal."

Imam al-Nizar was well aware of the domination of al-Afdal and a vein of animosity in his character for him. It is possible that he thought it futile to produce the written document in the palace, because according to Ibn Khaldun (4:139) the sister of Imam al-Mustansir had falsely witnessed in the court the story of change of *nass*, therefore, he did not come back to the palace and quitted Cairo. Soon afterwards, Imam al-Nizar appeared in Alexandria, with his brother, Abdullah and an *amir*, Muhammad ibn Massal al-Maliki. Nasir ad-Dawla Iftagin at-Turki, the governor of Alexandria swore allegiance to Imam al-Nizar and proclaimed his support. Jalal ad-Dawla bin Ammar, the *qadi* of Alexandria also supported the cause of Imam al-Nizar. In Alexandria, the Imam promulgated the Nizarid Ismaili mission and adopted the title of *al-Mustapha li-dinillah* (the chosen for God's religion).

Nasir Khusaro and Hasan bin Sabbah were promulgating the Nizarid Ismaili mission in Badakhshan and Iran in accordance with the directions they had personally received from Imam al-Mustansir when they had been in Cairo. Granted that the theory of change of *nass* was a genuine, then these missionaries must have been intimated, but it was claimed only in the court as a tool to make al-Musta'li enthroned.

Al-Afdal feared the growing power of Imam al-Nizar in Alexandria, where he spurred his horses in 488/1095, but suffered a sharp repulse in the first engagement, and retreated to Cairo. According to Ibn Athir and Ibn Khallikan, Imam al-Nizar also got favour of the nomad Arabs and dominated the northern area of Egypt.

Al-Afdal once again took field with huge army and besieged Alexandria. He tempted the companions of Imam al-Nizar, and fetched them to his side. Ibn Massal was the first to have deserted the field from the thick of fight, and fled with his materials by sea towards Maghrib. It is related that Ibn Massal had a dream that he was walking on horseback, and al-Afdal was walking in his train. He consulted an astrologer, who remarked that he who walked on the earth was to possess it. On hearing this, Ibn Massal collected his wealth and fled to Lokk, a village near Barqa in Maghrib. This defection marked the turning point of Imam's power. In addition, the long siege resulted great fortune to al-Afdal, wherein many skirmishes took place. Imam al-Nizar and his faithful fought valiantly, but due to the treachery of his men, he was arrested and taken prisoner with Abdullah and Iftagin to Cairo.

Iftagin was executed in Cairo. According to Ibn Khallikan, Imam al-Nizar was immured by his brother al-Musta'li's orders and al-Afdal had him shut up between two walls till he died in 490/1097. According to John Alden Williams in **Islam** (New York, 1967, p. 218), "The followers of al-Nizar in Abbasid territory refused to accept this and took Nizar's son to one of their mountain fortress, Alamut."

The Ismaili missionaries spread the Nizari Ismailism since the time of Imam al-Mustansir by leaps and bounds. Hasan bin Sabbah operated the Nizarid mission freely throughout its length and breath and established the Nizarid rule at Alamut in Iran. Henceforward, the center of the Nizari Imamate with a large following in Iran, Syria and Central Asia, transferred from Egypt to Iran.

Muhammad bin Ali al-Suri, the Fatimid *da'i* in Syria, who died few months after Imam al-Mustansir billah in 488/1095, had enumerated the Imams in a long Arabic poem, vide **al-Qasida**

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al-Suriyya (ed. Arif Tamir, Damascus, 1955, pp. 41-71). He is said to have given his full supports to the cause of Imam al-Nizar in Syria and propagated to this effect in his region.

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According to Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Massal received a letter from al-Afdal, inviting him to return to Egypt, which he did, and was honourably received in Cairo.

Al-Musta'li remained a puppet in the hands of al-Afdal throughout his short reign (1094-1101), during which the Crusaders first appeared in 490/1097 in the Levant to liberate the holy land of Christendom. The Crusaders easily defeated the local Fatimid garrison, and occupied Jerusalem in 492/1099. By 493/1100, the Crusaders had gained their footholds in Palestine, and founded several principalities based on Jerusalem and other localities in Palestine and Syria. In the midst of the Fatimids' continued attempts to repel the Crusaders, al-Musta'li died in 495/1102, who made no personal contribution to the Fatimid rule. He virtually held no power in the state, and came out only as required by al-Afdal at the public functions.

W.B. Fisher writes in **The Middle East and North Africa** (London, 1973, p. 243) that, "After the death of al-Mustansir, the six succeeding caliphs had no power". After Musta'li's death, al-Afdal proclaimed al-Musta'li's five year-old son, Abu Ali al-Mansur, surnamed al-Amir (d. 524/1130).

We have seen heretofore that al-Afdal was an absolute master of the Fatimid empire for 27 years and was murdered in 515/1121. Ibn Qalanisi writes in **Tarikh-i Dimashq** (tr. H.A.R. Gibb, London, 1932, p. 163) that, "It was asserted that the Batinis (Ismailis) were responsible for his assassination, but this statement is not true." Yaacov Lev writes in **State and Society in Fatimid Egypt** (London, 1991, p. 55) that, "On 30 Ramzan 515/12 December 1121, al-Afdal was assassinated and his twenty-seven years of military dictatorship were brought to an end. Although one of the assassins was captured, who masterminded the plot remains unknown. From reading the sources one receives the impression that the Nizari Ismailis perpetrated the killing. However, judging by the subsequent events, al-Amir must have been involved in the plot."

Ibn Khallikan (1:613-4) writes that, "It was al-Afdal who, on the death of al-Musta'li, placed al-Amir, that sovereign's son on the throne: he then took the direction of public affairs into his own hands, and having confined the prince in his palace, he prevented him from indulging his passion for pleasure and amusements. This treatment induced al-Amir to plot against his *vizir's* life, and on the evening of Sunday, the 30th Ramzan, 515, as al-Afdal rode forth from his habitation in the imperial palace, he was attacked by the conspirators and slain while proceeding towards the river."

Henceforward, the Fatimid rule embarked on its rapid decline. The supposed infant son of al-Amir is named, Tayyib, about two and half years old, but De Lacy O'Leary holds however that when al-Amir's wife was delivered, her child was a daughter (op. cit., p. 223). Anyhow, the chief guardian of Tayyib was Ibn Madyan, who is said to have hidden the minor Tayyib in a mosque called Masjid ar-Rahma. Makrizi tells that the infant son of al-Amir was carried in a basket after wrapping it up and covering it over with vegetables. Here in the mosque, a wet nurse cared for him. And all of this was done without Hafiz knowing anything about it. Makrizi also writes that Tayyib was arrested and killed. The followers of Tayyib in Yamen however believed that he was hidden in 524/1130 and his line exists even today in concealment. The Ayyubid ruler Saladin (d. 589/1193) at length, put an end of the Fatimid rule in 567/1171, and had the *khutba* read in Cairo in the name of Abbasid caliph al-Mustadi (d. 575/1180), thus proclaiming Abbasid suzerainty in Egypt.

HADI BIN AL-NIZAR (490-530/1097-1136), 20TH IMAM

Abu Ali Hasan, or Ali, surnamed *al-Hadi* was born in Cairo in 470/1076. He was about 17 years old on the eve of the death of Imam al-Mustansir, and 20 years during assumption of Imamate in

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490/1097. Henceforward, the seat of Imamate transferred from Egypt to Iran owing to the bifurcation among the Ismailis, where Hasan bin Sabbah had founded the Nizarid Ismaili state in the fortress of Alamut.

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Imam al-Nizar is reported to have killed in Cairo most probably in 490/1097 in imprisonment. After his death, there appeared no Nizari Ismailis opposition in Egypt. Certain influences of the Nizari Ismailis however have been known in Egypt, whom according to **Tarikh-i Misr** by Ibn Muyassar, Hasan bin Sabbah is said to have sent material aids in 518/1123-4. It is reported that al-Afdal closed the Dar al-Hikmah where he found many professions supporting the cause of Imam al-Nizar.

Hafiz Abru (d. 833/1430) writes in his **Majma al-Tawarikh-i Sultaniyya** (p. 242) that, "Only one of al-Nizar's sons was arrested with him, and the other son disappeared in Alexandria, who was neither arrested nor recognized." This seems an erroneous account, as the arrested sons were Abu Abdullah al-Hasan and Abu Abdullah al-Hussain, who were prominent faces in the Fatimid court. The third son under shadow was Ali al-Hadi, who had managed to escape from Alexandria.

Ibn Zafir (d. 613/1216) writes in **Akhbar ad-Dawla al-Munqatia** (pp. 97-111) that the two sons of Imam al-Nizar rebelled in turn after escaping from prison. Abu Abdullah al-Hasan rebelled against al-Hafiz (524-544/1131-1149) in 528/1133, while Abu Abdullah al-Hussain rose against al-Adid (555-567/1160-1171) in 557/1161, assuming the title of al-Muntasir billah. These rebellions ultimately were suppressed because of mustering handful supporters, but it most possibly forced the Fatimid authority to focus their attention upon the handful followers of Imam al-Nizar in Egypt, paving a way to Imam al-Nizar's third son, al-Hadi to escape from their investigation.

It appears from the historical report that Imam al-Nizar had managed to send away his son and successor al-Hadi in Maghrib before his submission through his most confident follower, named Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi. It is almost certain that they boarded a vessel from Alexandria for Meila, and after crossing Mount Bouiblan and Muluya river, they reached Rissani, near Erfoud and stayed in the house of Imam al-Nizar's aunt in Sijilmasa. Ali bin Yousuf (480-500/1087-1106), the Almoravid ruler had captured Sijilmasa in 450/1056 and dominated it when Imam al-Hadi had been there.

The narrative of **Kitab al-Akhbar wa'l Athar** by Muhammad Abu'l Makrem is absolutely inaccurate and far from the truth. It recounts that the escaping Imam from Alexandria was Imam al-Nizar himself, who came in Sijilmasa, and then made his way to the castle of Alamut. It is most probably spurious, as it does not occur in any well-established sources. Ibn Khallikan, Ibn Athir, Ibn Khaldun and Makrizi are the accredited authorities on Fatimid history, and they also admit that Imam al-Nizar was taken prisoner to Cairo, and was killed in the prison. De Lacy O'Leary had investigated the primary sources and writes in **The Short History of the Fatimid Khilafat** (London, 1923, p. 212) that, "Nizar's subsequent life is totally unknown. He was either imprisoned in absolute secrecy, or put to death: stories were told of both these ends, but nothing was ever known for certain." It seems that the entire matter was over in the beginning of 489/1096, because al-Musta'li had intimated the whole story to the governors of his realm through a letter dated 8th Safar, 489/February, 1096.

Granted for a while that Imam al-Nizar had escaped from Alexandria, then it is possible that al-Afdal had not returned to Cairo and had made an intensive search. Besides, Imam's most confident supporter, Iftigin also accompanied him, had Imam al-Nizar made his secret way out of Alexandria. It is therefore, not possible to value the doubtful version of Muhammad Abu'l Makrem.

The Nizari Ismaili influence also penetrated in the Maghrib, and we are told that some of the followers of Imam al-Nizar in Berber tribe had engineered revolts against the later Fatimid rulers from their base in the Maghrib, which was not in the Fatimid control since 442/1050.

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It seems probable that Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi had moved from Sijilmasa with Imam al-Hadi after the death of al-Musta'li in 495/1095. After a long and tedious journey, they alighted in the vicinity of Rudhbar, the chief city of Daylam in Iran after crossing the ranges of Mount Taliqan. Since Alamut was immured and stormed by the Seljuqs at that time, Imam al-Hadi had to conceal himself either in the villages of Rudhbar, or in some remote place. He was taken to the vicinity of Alamut after restoration of peace, which was only known to Hasan bin Sabbah and none else. He caused Imam's dwelling in a village at the foot of Alamut. Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi is said to have stayed about six months, and then he returned to Egypt. Imam al-Hadi finally made his footing in the castle of Lamasar after the death of Hasan bin Sabbah in 518/1124.

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The period under review denotes the second *dawr-i satr* of the Ismaili history (490-559/1097-1164), wherein three Imams lived in concealment during about 70 years, viz. Imam al-Hadi, Imam al-Mohtadi and Imam al-Kahir. During the period of *satr*, the Ismaili *hujjats* governed the Nizari state, viz. Hasan bin Sabbah, Kiya Buzrug Ummid and Muhammad bin Kiya.

The tradition widely famous about Imam al-Hadi's arrival in Iran consists of very meager details, which is cited in the later sources, namely **Dabistan al-Mazahib** (comp. in 1653), **Janat al-Amal** (comp. in 1886), **Athar-i Muhammadi** (comp. in 1893) etc. It reads: - "It is recounted by the Ismailis of Rudhbar and Kohistan that during the time of Hasan bin Sabbah, Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi, one of the confident persons, came in Alamut and brought a son of al-Nizar bin al-Mustansir, who was a legitimate Imam. Nobody except Hasan bin Sabbah knew about this secrecy. Hasan bin Sabbah treated Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi with honour and consideration and caused the Imam to dwell in a village at the foot of Alamut. Abu'l Hasan as-Sa'idi was allowed to return back after six months. Imam remained engaged in divine worship in seclusion, and then betrothed to a woman in that village, who bore a son, named al-Mohtadi."

It ensues that the story of about 10 years has been summed up in the above one tradition. Imam al-Hadi was brought from Maghrib through the routes of Egypt, while the tradition simply indicates his arrival from Egypt to Iran. Secondly, it admits that this tradition was widely known among the Ismailis of Rudhbar and Kohistan, which must have been famous possibly long after the departure of Imam al-Hadi from those places. Thirdly, Hasan bin Sabbah caused the living of Imam al-Hadi at the foot of Alamut, which was only known to him, gives further clue to understand that the existence of the Imam around Alamut was also kept secret. Fourthly, it speaks Imam's marriage in that village and the birth of his son. It transpires that Imam al-Hadi would have been in the village till 500/1106 when his son al-Mohtadi was born. Fifthly, Ata Malik Juvaini (p. 682) has quoted the last will of Hasan bin Sabbah, whose concluding lines run: - "And he charged, until such time as the Imam came to take possession of his kingdom." It further indicates that Imam al-Hadi was yet in the vicinity of Alamut when Hasan bin Sabbah died in 518/1124. These narratives seem to show that Imam al-Hadi had come in the castle after 518/1124. He must have inspected the administrative fabric and the Ismaili mission from Kiya Buzrug, and then had gone to live in the castle of Lamasar most probably after 526/1132.

Another less reliable story relates that the Imam brought from Egypt to Alamut was al-Mohtadi, the grandson of Imam al-Nizar. This story seems to have been prevalent in the orbits, who believed that Imam al-Nizar had only two sons and were imprisoned with him. It has been heretofore discussed that the whereabouts of Imam al-Hadi had not been exposed in Cairo, and instead, the two other sons of Imam al-Nizar were made familiar figures. These sons had been also taken prisoners in Alexandria, which was enough for their opponents to cultivate a report that "all the sons of al-Nizar" were arrested. The age of Imam al-Hadi was about 16-17 years during the ascension of Imam al-Nizar, and those who definitely knew him, had spoken of him as the minor son of Imam al-Nizar, which was a term continued to be employed for Imam al-Hadi till his arrival in Alamut after 518/1124 when he was about 50 years old. On that juncture, the scholars seem to have drawn an opinion that the arriving minor son of Imam al-Nizar in Alamut should have been the son of Imam al-Hadi, who was also 17-18 years old at that time. The theory of minor son thus became specific for Imam al-Mohtadi, making him born in Egypt too. There is probably much truth in the traditional view, according to which the marriage of Imam al-Hadi was actualized in the village at the foot of Alamut, and his son al-Mohtadi was the first Nizari

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Imam to be born in Iran, and therefore, the assumption purporting the arrival of Imam al-Mohtadi seems doubtful and indecipherable.

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The major part of the life of Imam al-Hadi passed in the shadow of the striking personalities of Hasan bin Sabbah and Kiya Buzrug Ummid. Abu Muhammad al-Iraqi in his **al-Firaq** (Ms. 791 in the library of Sulemaniyya mosque, Istanbul) compiled soon after the fall of Alamut in 654/1256, and Zakariya Qazwini (1203-1283) in **Athar al-Bilad wa-Akhbar al-Ibad** (comp. in 661/1263) admit the very presence of Imam al-Hadi in Alamut. The Egyptian historian Ibn Muyassar (1231-1278) writes in **Tarikh-i Misr** (p. 68) that, "Hasan bin Sabbah introduced an Imam to his successors during his death-bed."

Imam al-Hadi continued to guide his followers in the religious matters through Kiya Buzrug from Lamasar without making public appearance. The fragments of the traditions inform nothing for him. It is however sparsely recorded that there had been an open ground inside the castle of Lamasar, where he used to take interest in horse riding and horse breeding. It is also said that Imam al-Hadi used to visit several times in the vicinity of Lamasar at night in seclusion and distributed foods and clothes to the poor villagers.

Imam al-Hadi died in 530/1136 at the age of 60 years, after bequeathing the office of the Imamate to his son, al-Mohtadi, when Kiya Buzrug was governing the Ismaili state in Alamut.

MOHTADI BIN AL-HADI (530-552/1136-1157), 21ST IMAM

Muhammad bin Ali, surnamed al-Mohtadi is reported to have born in 500/1106. He was the first Ismaili Nizari Imam to be born in Iran. He is also called Muhtab and Muhammad I.

The Seljuq sultan Sanjar was ruling in Iran, while Iraq was under the control of sultan Masud. Sultan Malikshah III (547-548/1152-1153) was followed by Sanjar, and then Muhammad II (548-555/1153-1160). In Baghdad, the Abbasid caliph Rashid (529-530/1135-1136) was dethroned by sultan Masud, and Muktadi had been placed on the throne, who ruled till 555/1160. He was harsh against the Ismailis, and caused the manuscripts of **Ikhwan as-Safa** burnt in Baghdad, along with the writings of Ibn Sina in 545/1150. In Egypt, the Fatimid empire was in the hand of Abdul al-Hafiz (524-544/1130-1149), succeeded by al-Zafir (d. 549/1154) and al-Faiz (d. 555/1160).

Imam al-Mohtadi is said to have reorganized the Ismaili mission from his base in Lamasar. In 530/1136, he deputed *da'i* Zayn bin Abi Faraj in Syria with a sealed letter. This letter is preserved in the manuscript of *da'i* Ibrahim bin Abi'l Fawaris, who copied it on 16th Shawal, 890/1502, in which Imam al-Mohtadi addressed to his Syrian followers that:

"Verily, I am your Mawla Muhammad bin Ali bin Nizar. May God curse one who denies to believe the truth and covers it. We have charged *da'i* Zayn ibn Abi Faraj ibn Abi'l Hasan ibn Ali with this pledge to make the truth cleared for you for the manifestation of the truth...."

In this letter, Imam al-Mohtadi traces his lineage four times from Imam al-Nizar and concludes that, "After the termination of the 40th time (*dawr-i arb'in*), and (then) also after passing away of the 70th period (*mudatu's sab'in*), the time will be approaching for the appearance of the manifest truth (*haq-i mubin*) that will cause all the matters to obliterate and the earth will be glorified with the light of faith. The truth with his word (i.e., Imam) shall manifest in near future in the hearts of the seekers of gnosis."

The above letter was written as soon as Imam al-Mohtadi assumed the Imamate in 530/1136, describing the passing away of 40 years of *dawr-i satr* (concealment period) from 490/1097. He also foretold the appearance of an Imam in his descent after completion of 70 years on the whole.

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It was a prediction most probably for the Great Resurrection (*qiyamat-i qubra*) celebrated in 559/1164.

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Kiya Buzrug had laid a firm foundation of the Nizari state for an independent territorial rule, and also minted the Nizari coin. He died in 532/1138 after ruling for 14 years. Imam al-Mohtadi appointed his son Muhammad bin Kiya as the third *hujjat* and ruler.

In 1966, the American Numismatic Society, New York acquired a great rarity of a coin, minted in 553/1158. It was illustrated in the American Numismatic Society's Annual Report for 1966 (pl.III,2). George C. Miles gave its detail in **Coins of the Assassins of Alamut** (Orientalia Lovaniensa Periodica, 3-5, 1972-74, pp. 155-162). Its size is 14 mm., weighing 0.635 gm. Its obverse side bears the name, "Muhammad bin (Kiya) Buzrug Ummid" and in the marginal legend, the name of the mint, kursi al-Daylam and the date 553 A.H. (1158 A.D.) have been clearly inscribed. The reverse area begins with the Shi'ite formula: "Ali is the friend of God" and the next three lines read: *al-Mustapha li dinillah, Nizar* (Nizar, the chosen for the religion of God). These three lines are followed by the marginal legend: *amir al-mo'minin, salwat Allah alayhi wa-ala aba'ihi al-tahirin wa-abna'hi al-akramin* (the blessings of God be upon him and upon his ancestors, the pure ones; and upon his descendants, the most honourable ones). George C. Miles reproduced the photographs of the six coins: There are few other coins minted at kursi al-Daylam with the same legends, differing only in dates.

It implies that the six coins from above had been struck during the period of Imam al-Mohtadi (530-552/1136-1157), and the two coins during the period of Imam al-Kahir (552-557/1157-1162). The early Imams in Alamut lived in concealment. They could show their slight appearances, but not whereabouts. None among them had taken power of the Nizari state at that time, and therefore, the name of the ruler, Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug (532-557/1138-1162) was struck in the coins for governing the state. Paula Sanders however remarks in his **Ritual, Politics, and the City in Fatimid Cairo** (New York, 1994, p. 85) that, "The authority of the Fatimid caliph was challenged by the coins struck by the Nizaris at Alamut in the name of Nizar."

The above coins however bear the benedictory words, invoking the prayers for Imam al-Nizar, his ancestors and his descendants. This antique and numismatic evidence further concludes that the descendants of Imam al-Nizar in fact existed in Alamut, and rules out the views of the historians, purporting the discontinuation of the Nizarid line. Ibn Khallikan (1211-1282) writes in his **Wafayat al-A'yan** (tr. de Slane, Paris, 1868, 1:160) that, "Nizar is the person from whom the Ismaili princes (Imams), the possessors of the fortress of Alamut and other castles in Persia; trace their descent."

Meanwhile, the Seljuq sultan Daud, who had severely domineered on the Ismailis in Azerbaijan and was becoming a major threat. In 538/1143, four Ismaili *fidais* had to kill him at Tabriz to avoid further massacres.

Muhammad Taqi bin Ali Reza compiled **Athar-i Muhammadi** in 1310/1893, dealing with the history of the Ismaili Imams. It relates one incredible story that Kiya Buzrug Ummid had made a will to his son, Muhammad bin Kiya that he must give up the power in favour of Imam al-Mohtadi when he grew young. One day, when Muhammad bin Kiya asked about it to Imam al-Mohtadi, the latter said, "This is the task of my son Hasan after our death." Muhammad bin Kiya feared to hear it, since Imam al-Mohtadi had no male issue at that time. When Imam al-Mohtadi was at death-bed, he summoned Muhammad bin Kiya, and said, "My wife is expecting a child. You take her to your house after me and do not make a little snag in her treatment. She will bear a son, whom you name "Hasan", because he will be like his forefather in beauty, virtue, knowledge, ethic, fame and grandeur. You must consider him as your own son, and deliver him the power."

Granted that the above story is historically genuine, it will mean that Imam al-Kahir would have been born in 552/1157 immediately after the death of his father, Imam al-Mohtadi. It determines the age of Imam al-Kahir for five years when he died in 557/1162, which is absolutely false. Secondly, the above story indicates the name of the son of Imam al-Mohtadi as "Hasan" instead of

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al-Kahir, brushing off the historicity of Imam al-Kahir. Granted for a while that the son of Imam al-Mohtadi was Hasan, then it means that Hasan (or Hasan II) was hardly nine years old during his death in 561/1166, which is also unbelievable. In sum, the story of **Athar-i Muhammadi** is quite fictitious and contrary to the Ismaili traditions.

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Imam al-Mohtadi was also taking care of the horses bred by his father in the fortress of Lamasar. He is also reported to have taken several visits of surrounding castles in Rudhbar. He died in 552/1157 at the age of 52 years. He vested the office of Imamate in his elder son, al-Kahir.

KAHIR BIN AL-MUHAMMAD (552-557/1157-1162), 22ND IMAM

Hasan bin Muhammad bin Ali, surnamed al-Kahir bi-Quwatullah, or al-Kahir bi-Ahkami'l was born in 520/1126. His official name with Alamut's records was Hasan bin Muhammad, also known as Hasan I.

In Baghdad, the Abbasid caliph Muktafi (d. 555/1160) was ruling at that time, and was succeeded by caliph Mustanjid (d.566/1170). In Iran, the Seljuq sultan Muhammad I (d. 555/1160) was succeeded by Suleman Shah (d. 556/1161) and Arslan (d.571/1176). In Egypt, the Fatimid ruler al-Faiz (d.555/1160) was followed by al-Adid (d. 567/1171), the last of the Fatimids.

The period of Imam al-Kahir was very peaceful, because Seljuq had waged not a single war against the Ismailis. The Nizari state had been recognized by the neighbouring rulers, and the Nizari coinage was also in circulation. The *dawr-i satr* was almost on the verge of completion, therefore, Imam al-Kahir pre-arranged its celebration in his period. It appears that he intended few major changes in Alamut, and therefore, he resolved to take over the power from Muhammad bin Kiya. In 554-5/1160, Imam al-Kahir moved to Alamut, and caused a small gathering of the faithful, and took the charges from Muhammad bin Kiya in a simple ceremony. He also received a ceremonial oath of allegiance from Muhammad bin Kiya and the followers. He declared Muhammad bin Kiya as his *vizir* and hailed his valuable services. The Imam also made a trip round the valley of Alamut on a horse with his new *vizir* to inspect the administration. The Nizari state entered henceforward into a new era when an Imam began to govern both religious and temporal powers. John Malcolm writes in **History of Persia** (London, 1815, 1:402) that, "Muhammad (bin Kiya Buzrug) probably gave up the name of power, as he constituted himself the *vizir* of the prince (Imam), whom religious consideration had led him to raise to the dignity of chief ruler."

Most of the sources are hostile, who have drawn the conclusion that Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug continued to remain as the third ruler till 557/1162, which is not in affirmity with the Ismaili traditions. Muhammad bin Kiya held the office till 554/1160 as a third ruler, and then Imam al-Kahir himself became the fourth ruler. Muhammad bin Kiya continued his services as a *vizir* from 554/1160 till his death in 557/1162.

Mustapha Ghaleb writes in **A'lam al-Ismailiyya** (Beirut, 1964. p. 244) that, "Imam al-Kahir executed the affairs of *dawa* and state together with great deal of intelligence and skill, whom he dealt by his own excellent hands. He issued official orders in all the Ismaili territories, informing Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug as his *hujjat* and the supervisor in political and martial affairs as well." Imam al-Kahir also announced that, "Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug is my *da'i, hujjat* and special representative. Those who adhere to our doctrines should obey him unitedly in the worldly matters, and comply with his orders, and consider his instructions as if the divine revelation. None should disobey his orders, and remain steadfast therewith, and enforce it as if they are acting for me."

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Hasan bin Sabbah had sent some *da'is* in Iraq, but owing to the incessant raids of the Seljuq, the Ismailis of Iraq lost their contact with Alamut. The local disputes of the *da'is* in Iraq also caused the mission inactive. According to **A'lm al-Ismailiyya** (p. 245), "Imam al-Kahir deputed his cousin and a confident *da'i*, Abu'l Hasan Sinan bin Suleman bin Muhammad towards Basra, with an instruction to reorganize the mission works. He blessed him with guidance and advices that proved potential in complying the assignment."

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Abu'l Hasan swept off the internal dissensions, and brought the mission of Basra under the Syrian *da'is*. Zahiri Faryabi was also an eminent Ismaili *da'i*, who had been sent by Imam al-Kahir to a chief *da'i*, Kamaluddin Kohistani for his further training. He was then appointed for the Ismaili mission at Daylam.

Imam al-Kahir died few months after the death of Muhammad bin Kiya at the end of 557/1162 after consigning the Imamate to his son, Hasan II.

It is worthwhile to write that when Imam al-Kahir took power in 554/1160, some misconception took place among the people residing at remote regions, mostly the Muslims of Qazwin, who cultivated two false theories in the lineage of the Ismaili Imams, which are examined as under:

1. The original name of Imam al-Kahir was Hasan bin Muhammad bin Ali and simultaneously, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya also bore the name, Hasan bin Muhammad. Both were familiar and close to the people in the vicinity of Alamut. When Muhammad bin Kiya died in 557/1162, it seems that the people considered Imam al-Kahir as his son because of knowing him as Hasan bin Muhammad. Besides, the death of Imam al-Kahir and Muhammad bin Kiya occurred in the same year had been regarded as the death of one character, and that too for Muhammad bin Kiya. This distorted theory had shadowed the historicity of Imam al-Kahir, making him Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya. When this theory became annulled and ineffectual, it was brushed aside and replaced by following theory.

2. In the second theory, the historicity of Imam al-Kahir has been ignored, making his real son, Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam (or Hasan II) as the son of Muhammad bin Kiya. This theory makes Hasan bin Muhammad bin Kiya and Hasan, the son of Imam al-Kahir as one and same person.

The zealots had designed the history of Alamut almost from the bits and shreds of above fictions, and contrived the theory of one Hasan, and that too not the son of Imam al-Kahir, but the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, which is in essence against the Ismaili doctrines. It is seen that few historians have lost sight of the explicit picture in the genuine Ismaili traditions, but nobody tried to shift the truth, and continued to repeat the fictions.

When an Imam and his successors officially took charge of the Alamut's rule, most of the people and the ruling powers in Iran amplified their bitter propaganda, fearing that the rulers of Alamut in Alid descent would attract a large following in Shi'ites Iran, and their political influence would also be threatened. The ruling powers did not need to issue any decree against the Imams, but minted a theory that Imam Hasan II was the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, incorporating it with prevalent rumours and tales. Ata Malik Juvaini's objective was to adulterate the history of the Imams, therefore, he also derived his informations from such forged accounts, and ignored the genuine Ismaili traditions. He designed quite a doubtful history at his full liberty after the destruction of Ismaili literature and documents. This is a sharp weakness of the sources, indicating a remote possibility, not a strong one.

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HASAN ALA ZIKRIHI'S SALAM (557-561/1162-1166), 23RD IMAM

Hasan Ali, or Abu'l Hasan, surnamed *Zikrihi's Salam* (peace be on his mention) was born in Alamut. He is reported to have born in 539/1145, but according to another tradition, he was born in 536/1142. The historians call him Hasan II with a view to count Hasan bin Sabbah as Hasan I in the series of Alamut's rulers, while other make his father, Imam al-Kahir as Hasan I and Hasan II to him in the list of Alamut's Imams.

His other titles were *Maliku'r riqab* (Lord of the slaves), *Maliku'l qulub* (Lord of the hearts), *Malik as-Salam* (Lord of peace), *Hasan-i Kabir* (Hasan, the great) and *Qaim al-Qiyama* (Lord of resurrection). Among the Iranian sources, he is widely known as *Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam*, and in the Syrian sources, he is called *Aqa dhikrihi al-Salam*. Mustapha Qazwini writes in **Tarikh-i Guzida** (ed. by Nicholson, Leiden, 1910, p. 523) that, "He was also known as *Kura Kiya* (Lord of the villages) in Qazwin, a fact which suggests that the people of Qazwin were especially acquainted with him."

We must cast a glance over contemporary period that the Abbasid caliph Mustanjid (d. 566/1170) was ruling in Baghdad at that time. The Seljuq sultan Arslan (d. 571/1176) was reigning in Iran. In Egypt, the last ruler of the Fatimid empire was al-Adid (d. 567/1171). The Muslim rules were submerging in declination, therefore, none among them had a courage to attack on Alamut.

According to **Religion, Learning and Science in the Abbasid Period** (ed. by Young, Latham and Ser Jeuit, London, 1990, p. 245), "Al-Hasan bin Sabbah's two *da'i* successors were followed at Alamut by Imam al-Hasan bin Qahir bin Mohtadi bin Hadi bin Nizar."

Ata Malik Juvaini (1126-1283) compiled **Tarikh-i Jhangusha** in 658/ 1260. He and later historians are responsible to distort the historical fact and produced an incredible image of the Ismaili history and doctrines. Juvaini's work, to quote W. Barthold in **Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion** (London, 1928, p. 40), "has not yet been valued at his deserts." Barthold further writes, "Juvaini is not completely master of his materials; in his narrative there are sometimes flagrant contradictions to be found." (Ibid.) According to **Historians of the Middle East** (London, 1962, p. 136), "Juvaini's sources appear to have been purely oral." Sir John Glubb also writes in **The Lost Centuries** (London, 1967, p. 271) that, "Juvaini served under Halagu in Persia and was thus perhaps obliged to flatter him." Henry H. Howorth remarks in his **History of the Mongols** (London, 1876, 1:20-21) that, "His position prevented Juvaini from being anything but a panegyrist of the Mongols, whose conquests he excuses, and whose western campaign he argues was providentially arranged, so that by their means the religion of Islam might be widely disseminated." D'Ohsson was the first European to have examined the work of Juvaini critically, and accused him of extravagant flattery of the Mongols, vide **Histoire des Mongols** (Amsterdam, 1834, 1:20). In the words of Marshall Hodgson, "Juwayni read records in the Alamut Nizari library after its capture, before ordering its destruction. He wrote an account based on these sources, but altered in form to suit an anti-Nizari taste, and decked with curses." (op. cit., p. 26). It is therefore, difficult to determine any exactitude in the hyperbolic words of Juvaini.

Juvaini emphasized to make Imam Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam (Hasan II) as the son of Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug, in a doubtful manner. His objective was to connect the lineage of the Imams with Muhammad bin Kiya. Juvaini and the later historians however had to admit that when Imam Hasan II made his appearance before his followers, thronged at Alamut, none opposed or considered him as the son of Muhammad bin Kiya. If there had been a little doubt, it is possible that they or a faction must have opposed without taking oath of allegiance, as it is a cornerstone of the Ismaili doctrines that an Imam must be a son of the Imam. No irrelevant person could venture on that occasion to claim for Imamate, and if it was true, it must have been claimed in other region, and not inside the castle, where his life was most possibly fraught in danger.

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According to **Dabistan al-Mazahib** (comp. in 1653, p. 237), "Only the enemies of Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam considered him the son of Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug." Dr. Nassih Ahmed Mirza writes in **Syrian Ismailis at the time of the Crusades** (an unpublished dissertation, University of Durham, 1963, p. 191) that, "During his (Hasan II) reign, his enemies spread false rumours that he was not a genuine descendant of Nizar, but these slanders were received by his followers with disgust and dissatisfaction. As for the Imam himself, he paid no attention to such slanders, but continued to send orders to his governors and *da'is* under his seal and signature which include his family trees, thus ignoring the propaganda of his calumniators."

Juvaini and others, who followed him attempted to equate Imam Hasan II with Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, making them one character, and tried to brush aside the historicity of Hasan II. Juvaini emphasized from beginning to end that Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya had impersonated as an Imam. The undeniable thing in the face of facts however reveals that these two persons, each known as Hasan at one time were two separate persons. Dr. Mustapha Ghaleb in **The Ismailis of Syria** (Beirut, 1970, pp. 73-74) has appended an important letter of Imam Hasan II, which had been circulated among the Ismailis in 558/1163. This letter itself asserts that both Imam Hasan II and Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya were two separate persons at one time. It reads:- "Our deputy, al-Hasan bin Muhammad bin Kiya Buzrug is our *da'i* and *hujjat*. All those who follow our doctrine have to obey him in the religious and civic affairs, and to execute his orders and consider his speeches as ours. We hope that they will not disobey; but be abided by it and act as if it was issued by us."

There had been three hidden Imams (*al-a'imma al-masturin*) between Imam al-Nizar and Imam Hasan II during the period of *dawr-i satr* in Alamut, whose historicity had been also stamped in the work of Juvaini. One important Syrian manuscript has been discovered, whose author and date of writing are unknown. The copyist gives his date of writing in 1263/1846. According to Dr. Nassih Ahmed Mirza, "The only clues that can be obtained are from the literary style and from the biographical works of the Imams. These suggest that the date (of the above Ms.) may be taken as sometimes during the second half of the 14th century A.D." (p.176). On pp. 249-250, the author of this Ms. gives the genealogy of Imam Hasan II as "Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam bin al-Qahir bin al-Mohtadi bin al-Hadi bin al-Nizar." Dr. Nassih Ahmed Mirza concludes his remarks that, "This is the only available Syrian manuscript which gives the same genealogical tree of the Nizari Imams as the one accepted by the modern Aga Khani Ismailis." (p.176). Muhibb Ali Qunduzi compiled his **Irshadu't-talibin di dhikr A'immati'l-Ismailiyya** in 930/1523 and asserts that there were three hidden Imams between Hasan II and al-Nizar, viz. Hadi, Mohtadi and Qahir. Ghiyasu-din bin Humami'd-din Khondamir (d.941/1534) compiled **Habibu's-Siyar** (Bombay, 1857, 3: 77) in 935/1528, also admits that there were three generations between Hasan II and al-Nizar, i.e., Hadi, Mohtadi and Qahir. Abu Ishaq Kohistani, who died in the beginning of the 16th century also writes in **Haft Bab** (tr. by W. Ivanow, Bombay, 1959, p. 23) that, "Mawlana Mustansir was succeeded by Mawlana Nizar, Mawlana Hadi, Mawlana Mohtadi, Mawlana Qahir and Mawlana Hasan Ala Zikrihi's Salam."

Among the modern scholars, John Norman Hollister writes in **The Shia of India** (London, 1953, p. 314) that, "Nizarin records are scarce having been largely destroyed in the period of Hasan's grandson, or by Halagu Khan when the fortress of Alamut was taken, but the traditions of the sect indicate that there were three Imams during this period: Hadi, son of Nizar, Mahdi or Mohtadi, and Qahir." According to Margoliouth in **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics** (Edinburgh, 1974, 2:141) that, "Hasan II though supposed to be the son of the governor of Alamut, was in reality the heir of this Nizar." W. Ivanow also states in **Ismailitica** (Calcutta, 1922, p. 71) that, "The version that Hasan was a lineal descendant of Kiya Buzrug Ummid naturally cannot be of sectarian origin, even should it be true." Neal Robinson writes in **Islam – A Concise Introduction** (Surrey, 1999, p. 169) that, "During Hasan's (Hasan bin Sabbah) reign, and the reigns of his two successors, the identity of the Imams was not disclosed. However, the fourth Lord of Alamut, Hasan II or Hasan ala dhikrihi s-salam (Hasan on his mention be peace) claimed to be the Imam in person."

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Qiyamat-i qubra or *qaim al-qiyama* was an occasion commemorated in Alamut on 17th Ramzan, 559/August 8, 1164 when Imam Hasan II came out publicly upon the termination of *dawr-i satr*. In his speech, he announced himself a legitimate Imam in the descent of Imam al-Nizar. Edward G. Browne writes in **A Literary History of Persia** (London, 1964, 2:454) that, "This Hasan boldly declared himself to be, not the descendant of Kiya Buzrug Ummid, but of the Fatimid Imam Nizar bin al-Mustansir." Imam Hasan II made his sermons in Arabic. The jurist Muhammad Busti stood up, and translated the Imam's sermons into Persian for those present. It was followed by the ceremony of an oath of allegiance from the cheering followers.

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It is a worth consideration to touch here another key point that Imam al-Hadi bin al-Nizar was born in Cairo in 470/1076 and his mother tongue was Arabic. He and his successors, Imam al-Mohtadi and Imam al-Kahir lived within the domestic environs in Iran in the fortress of Lamasar. They did not come in touch of the outside Iranian society and culture for a long time. It is therefore evident that these three Imams spoke Arabic at home, since their home tongue was in all cases Arabic, and Imam Hasan II was also brought up in the prevalent domestic environment. He, as a result delivered his sermons into Arabic. Granted that he was the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, who was an Iranian by birth, then he must have delivered his sermons into Persian, and not into Arabic. Secondly, Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya was hailed from Rudhbar, where he and his forebears were very familiar. The people of Rudhbar during the *qiyama* stood right opposite the pulpit and Imam Hasan II also mounted the pulpit from that side; who could easily see the Imam. Granted that the Imam on the pulpit was Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, then it is most likely that the people of Rudhbar had perceived him. Since there happened nothing, which affords a proof that the people of Rudhbar had certainly perceived Imam Hasan II as a son and rightful successor of Imam al-Kahir, and not Hasan, the son of Muhammad bin Kiya, whom they knew well, therefore, one can hardly deny the logic springs from this argument. According to the Shi'ite doctrines, the Imamate cannot be altered or changed in any other descent. Nasiruddin Tusi (1201 -1274) in his **Rawdatu't-Taslim** (ed. and tr. by W. Ivanow, Leiden, 1950, p. 130) quotes Imam Hasan II as saying: "Know that this Imamate is true, will never go astray, became changed or altered. It was always preserved in the posterity of Mawlana (Ali), and will never become dissociated from them, either in appearance, or in meaning, or reality." W. Ivanow remarks on the phrase: "Know that this Imamate is true, will never go astray" that, "This may mean that the Imamate can never pass to someone, who is not a legitimate successor in the line of Imams" (Ibid).

Let us return to the contemporary narrative that Muhammad bin al-Hasan ibn Isfandiyar writes in **Tarikh-i Tabaristan** (comp. 613/1216) that Ustandar Hazarasf bin Shahrnush (560-586/1164-1190), the Buduspanid ruler of Rustamdar and Ruyan procured close ties with the Ismailis of Rudhbar, and gave them few castles in his territories. In the meantime, Husam ad-Dawla Ardashir (567-602/1172-1206), the Bawandid Ispahbad of Mazandaran raided the territories of Ustandar Hazarasf, who took refuge at Alamut. With the help of Ismaili forces, he took field and invaded his former territories. He killed an Alid who ruled over Daylaman. He was however captured by Ardashir, who killed him in 586/1190.

Meanwhile, the Ismailis had for some time not a single entanglement with the Seljuqids, whose power was rapidly on the decline. In 560/1165, however, during the time of the Seljuq sultan Arslan (556-571/1161-1176), the Ismailis who had then built a new fortress outside Qazwin, besieged that town without availing approval from Alamut. The Ismailis however lifted the siege when sultan Arslan's big force came to the help of the people of Qazwin. In about 561/1166, the Seljuq *amir* Muhammad bin Anaz attacked on the Ismaili localities at Qazwin in reprisal and killed some of them and taken away rich booty.

A year and a half after the declaration of *qiyama*, on 6th Rabi I, 561/January 9, 1166, Imam Hasan II was stabbed in the castle of Lamasar by his brother-in-law, Hasan bin Namavar, who belonged to a local Daylami branch of the Buwahid line, which had ruled in western Iran as a Twelve Shi'ite dynasty. Hasan II was succeeded by his 19 years old son, Ala Muhammad.

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ALA MUHAMMAD (561-607/1166-1210), 24TH IMAM

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Nuruddin Muhammad, surnamed Ala, also called Ala Muhammad or Muhammad bin Hasan, was born around 550/1155 or 553/1158 in Alamut. He is also known as Muhammad II, and sometimes as Ziaruddin Muhammad. His mother related to the Buwahid family. Immediately upon his accession, he arrested Hasan bin Namavar and his relatives and sentenced them to death, who were responsible to kill the Imam's father.

Bernard Lewis writes in **The Assassins** (London, 1967, p. 95) that, "Hasan was succeeded by his son Muhammad, who proceeded to confirm that his father and therefore he himself were descendants of Nizar, and Imams. He is said to have been a prolific writer, and during his long reign, the doctrine of the Resurrection was developed and elaborated." B. Hourcade writes that, "Hasan's son, Nur al-din Mohammad II (d. 607/1210), consolidated the work of his father, whom he pronounced the true Imam, the secret son of a descendant of Nizar who had hidden at Alamut." (cf. **Encyclopaedia of Iran and Islam** ed. by Yarshater, London, 1982, p. 800).

Imam Ala Muhammad was greatly engaged in his interest on philosophy and esoteric doctrines. His literary output was voluminous and had compiled several books on Koranic exegesis to broach the doctrines of the Ismailis. He was well steeped in Arabic and composed many proverbs and poetry in Arabic, whose fragments had been into the memories of the Muslims in Qazwin. Few misconceptions had started among the Muslims during his period about the *qiyama* in Iran and Syria, therefore, Imam Ala Muhammad wrote several tracts to justify the doctrines of *qiyama*. In his elaboration of the doctrine of *qiyama*, he also assigned as usual a central role to the Imam. It further implied a complete personal transformation of the Ismailis who henceforth were expected to see nothing but the Imam and the manifestation of the divine truth in him. The Imam was defined in his essence as the epiphany (*mazhar*) of God.

The period of Imam Ala Muhammad was longer, in which there had been no war between the Ismailis and neighbouring rules. It is possible that the Abbasid and Seljuq powers were at their downfall, and were incapable to attack the Ismaili castles. Meanwhile, an important political change took place in Iran and other eastern lands. The Seljuqs disintegrated after Sanjar's death in 552/1157, being replaced by the Turkish *amirs* and generals. It must be remembered that Tughril Beg (d. 455/1063) had founded the Seljuqid empire in 447/1055 and was declined in 590/1194. This dynasty produced 15 rulers belonging to seven generations.

Towards the end of the twelfth century a new power emerged in the east. South of the Aral sea lay the land of Khawaraz in Central Asia, whose rulers assumed the title of the *Khwarazmshahs*. In about 586/1190, the Khawarazmshah Alauddin Tekish (d. 596/1200) occupied Khorasan, thus becoming master of eastern Iran. The Khawarazmians soon came to have an impressive empire of their own, stretching from the boarders of India to Anatolia. The Seljuq dynasty came to an end everywhere except in Anatolia when Alauddin Tekish defeated Tughril III at Ray in 590/1194. The triumphant Khawarazmshah was the obvious ruler to fill the vacancy created by the Seljuqs, and in the following year, the Abbasid caliph Nasir (d. 622/1225) invested Alauddin Tekish with the sultanate of western Iran, Khorasan and Turkistan.

We come across an instance of Ustandar Hazarasf bin Shahrnush (560-586/1164-1190), the Baduspanid ruler of Rustamdar and Ruyan, who had harboured himself at Alamut. According to **Jamiut-Tawarikh** (pp. 170-173), Hazarasf had cemented his close relation with the Ismailis residing at Rudhbar and granted them few castles in his territories. When his relation deteriorated with his superior, Husam ad-Dawla Ardashir (567-602/1172-1206), the Bawandid Ispahbad of Mazandarn, he took refuge at Alamut as a result. In due course, Hazarasf raided his former territories with the help of the Ismaili *fidais* and killed an Alid ruler of Daylaman. He was at last arrested and killed by Ardashir in 586/1190.

According to **Jamiut Tawarikh** (pp. 170-3), once Fakhruddin Razi (543-606/1149-1209) in his lectures to theological students in Ray harshly reviled the Ismailis. He used to say in his lectures

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that, "This is against the Islam. May God curse and disgrace them." Hearing intolerable words, a *fidai* was sent from Alamut to have it stopped. There he enrolled himself as a student, and attended Fakhruddin's lectures daily for seven months, until he found an opportunity of seeing him alone in his room. The *fidai* brandished a dagger and menaced him. Fakhruddin jumped aside, and said: "What do you want?" The *fidai* replied: "I want to slit your belly from the breast to the navel, because you have cursed us from the pulpit at each mention." After a tussle, the *fidai* hurled him to the floor and sat on his chest with his poniard at his throat. The terrified theologian promised to repent, and to refrain from such attacks in future. The *fidai* allowed him to be persuaded, and accepting a solemn undertaking from Fakhruddin to mend his ways, produced a bag containing 365 gold *dinars* with two Yamenite garments, being the first payment of a pension that the Imam granted for him, and assured him for a similar amount of grant for every year if he kept his promise. Henceforth, Fakhruddin Razi took good care to avoid expressions offensive to the Ismailis. One of his students, noting this change, asked, why he no longer assailed the Ismailis. The theologian replied: "It is not advisable to curse the Ismailis, for they have both weighty and trenchant arguments." Fakhruddin Razi had truly changed his attitude, and condemned one Sunni theologian, who tried to refute the Ismaili doctrines with fanatical and ill-informed abuse, and praised another for correctly citing an Ismaili text. His point, of course, was that the theological controversy must be based on correct information and an intelligent understanding of an opponent's point of view. Farkhruddin Razi received the annual grant from Alamut for five years through Ra'is Muzaffar until he was in Ray.

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It is recounted that Qais bin Mansur al-Dadikhi was known to have visited Alamut during the period of Imam Ala Muhammad. He was born in Dadikh, a town in the district of Aleppo. He lived till the time of Imam Ala Muhammad and returned to Aleppo in 648/1250, where he died in 655/1257.

The celebrated Ismaili poet hailed from Khorasan, called Ra'is Hasan had visited Alamut around 587/1191, and glorified Imam Ala Muhammad in his poem, vide **An Old Ismaili Poem** tr. by W. Ivanow (cf. **Ismaili**, March, 1940, pp. 7-8). It was also a sort of prayer for seeking forgiveness for a breach of the mission rules in the Syrian community, and arrived in Iran to behold the Imam.

In Alamut, the period of Imam Ala Muhammad was noted for learning and prosperity. Taylor writes in **The History of Mohammedanism and its sects** (London, 1851, p. 187) that, "He was a diligent student himself and wrote several treatises on philosophy and jurisprudence which are valued highly even by those who were enemies of his order."

During the last 16 years of Imam Ala Muhammad's Imamate and reign, the Iranian Ismailis were engaged once again in petty warfare with their close neighbours. The Ismailis of Rudhbar had certain disputes with Mazandaran, and they had actually given refuge to Bisutun, the ruler of Ruyan who had engineered rebellion against the Bawandid Husam ad-Dawla Ardashir. In the meantime, the Ismailis began to spread their influences in Mazandaran and killed Rukn ad-Dawla Qarin, the younger brother of the Bawandid Shams al-Mulk Shah Ghazi Rustam II (602-606/1206-1210).

Meanwhile, the Ismailis of Rudhbar were confronted with the Khwarazmian general, who had replaced the Seljuqs in western Iran and were expanding their influence in Daylam. In 602/1205, Miyajiq, a Khwarazmian general, trickled and murdered a bulk of the Ismailis from Alamut and thereupon the Khwarazmian troops made themselves as the friends of the Qazwin, the traditional enemies of the Ismailis, and made raids from time to time on Rudhbar

Imam Ala Muhammad died on 10th Rabi I, 607/September 1, 1210 after the longest rule of 46 years. He had two sons, of whom the elder, Jalaluddin Hasan was succeeded to the Imamate.

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JALALUDDIN HASAN (607-618/1210-1221), 25TH IMAM

Hasan, surnamed Jalaluddin was born in 583/1187. He is also called as Hasan III. During his childhood, his father had designated him as his successor. According to John Malcolm in **History of Persia** (London, 1815, 1:405), "He is celebrated in Persian history for the kindness and generosity of his disposition; and we are informed that this prince of the Ismailis was the handsomest man for his age".

Culling up the different narratives, it appears that few Ismailis in northern Syria had misinterpreted the notion of the *qiyama* among the orthodox Muslims, who also in turn, ignored its inner Islamic substance and devised a derogatory imputation and engineered anti-propaganda in hyperbolic and opprobrious words. Dr. Nassih Ahmed Mirza writes that, "Among the Syrian Ismailis who lived far away from Alamut in a different environment, the teachings of the *qiyama* were probably not fully understood by all" (Ibid. pp. 156-7). Under these difficult circumstances, the basic teachings of the *qiyama* was bound to have been different in northern Syria from what was in Iran. Between 559/1164 and 607/1210, the orthodox machine sprouted out from all directions in Iran and Syria, reviling that the Ismailis had violated the Islamic Shariah. Dahalbi (d. 748/1348) writes in **Zubat at-talab fi Tarikh-i Halab** that, "The proclamation of *qiyama* in Iran was obvious, the more so since the Syrian historians clearly know nothing of the event of Alamut." Such episodes had possibly furnished further weighty excuse for the Muslim opponents of the Ismailis to accuse them of the outright abandonment of the Islamic law. One can judge from the imponderable and starkly fictitious accounts of the contemporary diplomats and travellers, about the nature of the rumours spread against the Ismailis. In a diplomatic report of 570/1175 of an envoy, Burchard of Strassburg, who had been sent to Syria by the Roman king Frederick I Barbarossa (1152-1190), indicates that Burchard had been ill-informed by the local Muslims about the Ismailis during his visit to Syria in 570/1175, which he produced in his report in a distorted form. He writes, "The Heyssessini live without law; they eat swine's flesh against the law of the Saracens, and make use of all women..." Ibn Jubayr, the Spanish traveler had also passed through the Syrian Ismailis territories on Friday, the 18th Rabi I, 580/June 29, 1184 and describes what he learnt through oral channels that, "On their slopes are castles belonging to the heretical Ismailites, a sect which swerved from Islam and vested divinity in a man (Sinan).... He bewitched them with these black arts, so that they took him as a god and worshipped him. They abased themselves before him, reaching such a state of obedience and subjection that did he order one of them to fall from the mountain top he would do so, and with alacrity that he might be pleased." (vide **The Travels of Ibn Zubayr** tr. by R.J.C. Broadhurst, London, 1952, p. 264). All this sounds that the unrealistic and incredible image of the Ismailis was portrayed in Syria. Dr. Nassih Ahmed Mirza continues to write: "This misunderstanding of the spiritual aims of the *qiyama*, which very likely were only understood by the most learned *da'is*, may together with political consideration have been the factor which prompted the grandson of Hasan Ala Dhikrihi al-Salam to reinstate the observance of the ordinary rituals of the Shariah." (Ibid. pp. 158-9).

And here we cannot but call attention to the fact that the *qiyama* involved an emphasis on the *batin* along with its counterpart, the *zahir*, was present in Ismailism from the earliest times. It is irrational judgment of some historians that the *qiyama* involved an abrogation of the Shariah, since the Ismailis had seldom deprecated it. Thus, Imam Jalaluddin Hasan restricted his followers not to preach the doctrine of *qiyama*. The most obvious inference from this action emerges that the esoteric teachings of Islam was since privatized, and the tradition of the Sufic *khanaqah* (cloister) came into existence in the Ismailis to observe the esoteric practices in solitude.

Imam Jalaluddin Hasan also cemented cordial relations with the Muslims rulers, so that the Ismailis living in the mountains for many years, can accelerate their economical conditions in the different cities. There are indications that at least some of the Ismailis were becoming increasingly weary of their isolation from the outside world. To make this possible, there had to be at least a measure of outward conformity. For generating friendship with the rulers, Imam

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Jalaluddin Hasan greatly needed first to make the people known that the Ismailis had never abrogated the Islamic Shariah. He ordered the building of mosques and public baths. He invited the Muslim theologians from Iraq and Khorasan. According to **The Cambridge History of Iran** (London, 1968, 5:476), "From the time of Hasan III, the Ismailis attracted to their libraries and to their learned patronage a large number of scholars from the outer world. Such scholars were free to maintain their prior religious convictions." Ibn Wasil (d. 697/1298) writes in **Mufarrid al-Kurub** (p. 211) that the Syrian Ismailis were also subsequently informed in 608/1211 to follow the policy of the Imam.

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Imam Jalaluddin Hasan sent his envoys to the Abbasid caliph Nasir, Muhammad Khwarazmshah, the rulers of Iraq and Azerbaijan to notify them of his religious policy, making them informed that the Ismailis were the true Muslims. Very rapidly, the Ismailis restored the lost prestige and began to spread in the Muslim cities. The Abbasid caliph Nasir also issued a decree in Baghdad in Rabi I, 608/August, 1211, proclaiming his close ties with Alamut. It is curious that the decree indicates that the Ismaili Imam had embraced Sunnism, which apparently is the addition in the original text by the later Sunni writers.

Some historians have curiously inflated in their narratives that Imam Jalaluddin Hasan had accepted the suzerainty of the Abbasids, which is also quite incorrect. Granted that the Alamut had recognized the supremacy of Baghdad, then the Abbasid *khutba* should have been recited in the Ismaili territories, which, of course did never occur. Secondly, if Alamut had been made the Abbasid's enclave, the rulers of Alamut followed by Imam Jalaluddin Hasan should have been directly appointed from Baghdad according to the prevalent custom, which also never took place. Imam Jalaluddin Hasan had actually cemented his friendly ties with the Abbasids and other Muslim rulers to restore the prestige of the Ismailis.

Imam Jalaluddin Hasan thus was held in high esteem and accepted as a chief amongst other chiefs, and his rights to the territories he dominated were officially acknowledged by the Abbasids. His mother went on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 609/1213 under the patronage of caliph Nasir, who received her with great pomp and deference. On that occasion, according to **A Short History of the Khawarzamshahs** (Karachi, 1978, pp. 72 and 207) by Prof. Ghulam Rabbani Aziz that the Abbasid caliph placed the flag of Khwarazamshah behind that of Jalaluddin Hasan, the ruler of Alamut, in the caravan of the pilgrims. She gave great amounts in charity, and had many well dug.

The improved relations were naturally beneficial to the Sunni Muslims as well. For instance, at the end of Imam Jalaluddin Hasan's rule, many Muslims including prominent scholars who were fleeing from the Mongolian strikes in Khorasan, found asylum in the Ismaili towns of Kohistan.

It is seen that the reforms of Imam Jalaluddin Hasan have been taken into wrong sense by Juvaini and other historians, tincturing with dubious stories. Juvaini claims that Imam Jalaluddin Hasan had given up the creeds of his forefather (p. 698) and professed Sunnism (p. 699). He seems to make a dogmatic different between the Imam with the previous Imams of Alamut. Granted that Imam Jalaluddin Hasan had deserted the creeds of his forefather and embraced Sunnism, then why he retained with him till death the spiritual authority of Imamate, and nominated his son as the next Imam in accordance with the fundamental concept of Shi'ism? Secondly, it is unlikely to confess the notion advanced by the historians that an Imam had adhered to the Sunnism on one hand and his followers continued to profess Shi'ism of an Ismaili *tariqah* on other. Imam Jalaluddin Hasan was absolutely an Imam of the Shi'a Ismaili Muslims, therefore, the opinions of the historians are utterly irrational and unrealistic. According to **The Cambridge History of Iran** (London, 1968, 5:470) that, "From an Imamate point of view, he (Jalaluddin Hasan) was undeniably the Imam: he had received the irrevocable designation by the preceding Imam and whatever he ordered was to be received in faith". Suffice it to say that the Syrian scholar, Arif Tamir cited a letter of Jalaluddin Hasan, in which he claims his Imamate and traces his descent from al-Nizar through Hasan II, vide **Sinan Rashid-ad-Din aw Shaikh al-Jabal** (cf. **al-Adib**, 23:45; May, 1953). It is also a matter worth consideration that his actions were not rejected by his followers, and he was also able to leave Alamut fearlessly and visited in

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foreign lands for 18 months and returned with no difficulty or mishap. W. Montgomery Watt writes in **Islam and the Integration of Society** (London, 1961, p. 77) that, "For the Ismailis, too, the Imam was an absolute autocrat, whose decrees had to be accepted. However strange his new decision might seem, a loyal follower could not question it, since he was bound to regard the Imam as knowing better than himself. In fact the community seems to have followed al-Hasan III without hesitation. He himself may genuinely have believed that he was acting in the best interests of the community."

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Imam Jalaluddin Hasan also procured close relation with the ruler of Gilan, and in 608/1212, he betrothed to the four women of Gilan. One among them was the sister of Kai'kaus bin Shahanshah, the ruler of Kutum, who bore Imam's successor, named Alauddin Muhammad.

Imam Jalaluddin Hasan developed close relation with Muzaffaruddin Ozbek bin Pahlawan Muhammad (607-622/1210-1225), the sixth and last Ildenizid ruler of Arran and Azerbaijan. When Ozbek decided to deal with Nasiruddin Mengli, his deputy in Irak-i Ajam who had rebelled, he sought help from Alamut. Imam Jalaluddin Hasan departed from Alamut under command of his army in 610/1214 to Azerbaijan, where he stayed at Ozbek's court. He remained for sometimes in Bailaqan with Ozbek, whence they sent joint ambassadors to Baghdad, Syria and other lands, seeking reinforcement in expelling Mengli from Irak-i Ajam. The Abbasid sent their army in command of Muzaffaruddin Wajh Sabu and an army was likewise sent from Syria. In 611/1215, a battle was fought near Hamadan, whereupon Mengli was defeated. After the victory, Imam Jalaluddin Hasan was granted the provinces of Abhar and Zanjan.

During the year and a half when Imam Jalaluddin Hasan was in Azerbaijan, Muzaffaruddin Ozbek treated him with great consideration and that was a brotherly feeling between them. Ozbek used to send him abundant supplies of provisions and excessive quantities of money, so much so that after meeting the requirements of Imam Jalaluddin Hasan in the way of rations of every kind and after dispensing the gifts and robes of honours which he showered not only upon his great officers but also upon the generality of his troops he would still every day sent 1,000 gold *dinars* to his treasury for current expenses.

The beginning of 7th/13th century was a terrible age for the whole Islamic rulers of Central Asia when the Mongol hordes emerged from Mongolia and began to threaten the Islamic world. The Mongols were a people of the Siberian forest who came from north into the slippers of Mongolia. They lived in a wild and primitive state of society, and their invasion inflicted more suffering on the human race than any other incident recorded in history of mankind. The monstrous hosts indiscriminately annihilated populations, pillaged towns and cities, wreaked special vengeance upon those who dared to resist them, and to whom they had promised immunity, converted the rich and smiling fields into deserts, and left behind the smoke of burning towns. Ruthlessly exterminating young and old, male and female, they obliterated cities and towns with their denizens, their schools, their mosques, their palaces, their libraries, their art treasures, largely nomadizing the region.

The Mongol empire, carved out at the expense of the Chi'n dynasty in North China, and the Sung in South China, was founded by Temujin (1162-1227), who assumed the name of Chenghiz Khan. He united the Mongol tribes and was acclaimed paramount Khan of the Mongols by an assembly (*quariltai*) of Mongol chiefs in 602/1206 at Karakorum. Beginning with campaigns in 601/1205, 603/1207 and 605/1209, he led the Mongols to destroy the rules of western Asia. Late in 625/1219 he advanced towards the Jaxartes. In 626/1220, he crossed Jaxartes and marched straight on Bukhara, whose cultural heritage, the accumulated intellectual wealth of centuries were obliterated in plunder, bloodshed and arson.

It must be remembered that the Ozbek's war with Mengli ended in 14 to 15 months, but Imam Jalaluddin Hasan prolonged his stay in Azerbaijan for 18 months. He was well kept with the terrible storms of the Mongols in Iran, therefore, he at once sent his envoys to Chenghiz Khan in Karakorum on 616/1219. The ambassadors of the Imam met Chenghiz Khan in the spring of 618/1221 at Balkh. He was the first among the Muslim rulers to send messages of good will to the

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Khan. His other precaution seems to reveal from his prolonged stay in Azerbaijan, where he had possibly selected a most suitable region to repair during emergency for himself or for his son, or grandson or any other. It seems that he had mapped out in this context an unscathed route from Alamut to Azerbaijan.

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In 618/1221, Imam Jalaluddin Hasan attended a banquet, where his enemies poisoned him. His *vizir*, who was the tutor of his successor, accused Imam's Sunni wives of Gilan in the conspiracy. It however resulted his death of dysentery in Ramzan, 618/November, 1221. His period of Imamate and rule lasted for 11 years, and was succeeded by his only son Alauddin Muhammad, who was then nine years old.

ALAUDDIN MUHAMMAD (618-653/1221-1255), 26TH IMAM

Alauddin Muhammad, or Muhammad III was born in 609/1213. He was succeeded by his father at the age of 9 years. The administration of the state affairs was governed by his gifted mother for about six years, which was the first instance when a woman administered at Alamut.

The period of six years (618/1221 to 624/1227) was very peaceful in Alamut, during which time the Imam's mother seems to have deposed many incapable governors in Rudhbar and Kohistan. It seems that some governors and officers had misused their powers in that period. In 624/1227, Imam Alauddin Muhammad took the power upon death of his mother at the age of 15 or 16 years, and appointed Imaduddin as his *vizir*. He dealt iron-handed against the corruptions and the persons misusing the powers. Most of them turned against him and went to live in Qazwin. In order to cover the story of their defalcations, they started to spread rumours against the Imam in bitter sarcasms. Some of them went on to propagate that the brain of Imam Alauddin Muhammad had been affected few months before 624/1227 when a physician operated him, causing waste of excess blood. The oppositions were however surmounted very soon.

A cursory glance of the contemporary rules indicates that the Abbasid caliph Nasir died in 622/1225, and was succeeded by Zahir (d. 623/1226), Mustansir (d. 640/1242) and Mustasim (d. 656/1258), the last of the dynasty. Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah (617-628/1220-1231) was however absolutely ruling in Central Asia.

The relation of the Ismailis with the Abbasids and Khwarazmshah was already improved. The relations of Khwarazmshah with the Abbasids and Ismailis were however strained in due course. Meanwhile, Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah was defeated by Chenghiz Khan in 618/1221 on the bank of the Indus, and he had to spend three years in India. The impact of the ceaseless Mongolian invasions forced the Khwarazamins of Bukhara and Samarkand to escape, and most of them took refuge in the Ismaili territory in Kohistan. The Ismailis helped them with all provisions. About this time, the Ismailis occupied Damghan, the capital town of the province of Kumis near Girdkuh. In the meantime, Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah tried vainly to restore his broken kingdom in 622/1225. He charged Nishapur to his officer, Orkhan, who subsequently entrusted it to his one deputy, who massacred the Ismaili settlements in Kohistan. It seems that after some initial hostilities, a peace treaty was negotiated in 624/1227 between the Ismailis and Khwarazamshah. According to the truce, the Ismailis were allowed to retain their hold on Damghan in return for the payment of an annual tribute of 30,000 *dinars*. Orkhan however continued his enmity, therefore, three Ismaili *fidais* once fell upon him and killed him outside the city in reprisal for raids against the Ismaili settlements in Kohistan. The three *fidais* were arrested and killed. Muhammad Nasawi (d. 645/1250) writes in **Sirat-i Jalaluddin** (Tehran, 1965, p. 232) that the three *fidais* with their last breaths, shouted: "We are sacrifices for our Lord Alauddin."

It was at this time that Badruddin Ahmad, the envoy of Alamut, was on his way to see Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah. Hearing of these occurrences, he wrote to *vizir* Sharf al-Mulk, asking his advice on whether to continue his journey or turn back. The *vizir*, fearing for his life, was too happy to

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welcome the Ismaili envoy. He therefore urged the envoy to join him and promised to do all he could to help him in his mission. The two now travelled together. When they reached the plain of Serat, in a moment of abandon at an eating session, Badruddin said: "Even here in your own army, we have our *fidais*, who are well established and pass as your own men." Sharf al-Mulk insisted eagerly on seeing them, and gave him his kerchief as a token of safe-conduct and immunity. Badruddin thereupon summoned five *fidais*, and when they came one of them, an Indian, said to Sharf al-Mulk: "I would have been able to kill you, I did not do so, because I had not yet received orders to deal with you." When Sharf al-Mulk heard these words, he cast off his cloak and sat before them in his shirt and said: "I am the slave of Alauddin as I am the sultan Jalaluddin's slave, and here I am before you. Do with me as you will." Words of this reached the Jalaluddin, who at once sent orders to burn the five *fidais* alive. It seems that the Ismaili envoy, Badruddin cut down his way and returned to Alamut, while the *vizir* pleaded for mercy for them, but of no avail, and was forced to comply with sultan's orders. A great fire was kindled at the entrance of his tent, and the five *fidais* were thrown into it, and the name of Imam Alauddin Muhammad was on their lips with their last breaths.

In Alamut, the Ismailis took its serious notice and resolved to confront once for all with Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah in reprisal, but Imam Alauddin Muhammad efficiently tackled the situation. He sent his envoy, Salauddin to *vizir* Sharf al-Mulk at Bardha'a. Nasawi (d. 645/1250) personally witnessed the aftermath and writes, "I was with Sharaf al-Mulk at Bardha'a, when an envoy called Salauddin came to him from Alamut and said: "You have burnt five of our *fidais*. If you value your safety, you must pay a bloodwit of 10,000 *dinars* for each of them." These words appalled and terrified Sharaf al-Mulk, so that he became incapable of thought and action. He favoured the envoy all others with generous gifts and splendid honours, and ordered me to write him an official letter, reducing by 10,000 *dinars* the annual tributes of 30,000 *dinars* which they were supposed to bring to the sultan's treasury. Sharaf al-Mulk then affixed his seal to the document." (op. cit., pp. 163-6)

On one occasion, Muhammad Nasawi was sent as an envoy of Jalaluddin to Alamut to demand the balance of the tribute that was owing for Damghan, and to settle other points of dispute. He succeeded to have his nice meetings with Imam Alauddin Muhammad and his *vizir* Imaduddin at Alamut.

Nasawi described his mission with satisfaction in his **Sirat-i Jalaluddin** (pp. 232-3) that, "Alauddin Muhammad favoured me above all the other envoys of the sultan, treating me with great respect and beauty. He dealt generously with me, and gave me twice the usual amount in gifts and robes of honour. This is an honourable man. Generosity to such a man is never wasted. The value of what was bestowed on me, in cash and in kind, was near 3000 *dinars*, including two robes of honour, each consisting of a satin cloak, a hood, a fur and a cape, one lined with satin and the other with Chinese crepe; two belts of 200 *dinars* weight; 70 pieces of cloth; two horses with saddles, bridles and harness and pommels; a thousand *dinars* in gold; four caparisoned horses; a string of Bactrian camels; and thirty robes of honour for my suite." From the narratives of Muhammad Nasawi, it appears that he obtained only a compromise solution during his meetings, He however, describes his mission with extreme satisfaction.

The Ismailis acquired new regions in Gilan and entered Ruyan. The Baduspanid ruler, Fakhr ad-Dawla Namavar bin Bisutun, who had succeeded his father shortly before 620/1223 was obliged to leave Ruyan. On the other hand, the relation between the Rudhbari Ismailis and the Qazwinis was also restored.

According to **Jamiut Tawarikh** (p. 181), Imam Alauddin Muhammad procured a close association with a Sufi Shaikh of Qazwin, Jamaluddin Gili (d. 651/1253) and sent him an annual grant of 500 gold *dinars*; who according to **Dabistan al-Mazahib** (1:265), had privily espoused Ismailism. The attitude of the Muslims of Qazwin in this context became more aggressive, therefore, Imam Alauddin Muhammad had to warn them that, "If the abode of Shaikh Jamaluddin was not in Qazwin, I would have not spared even the dust of your town."

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In Syria, Rashiduddin Sinan was succeeded in 589/1193 by an Iranian *da'i* Abu Mansur bin Muhammad. William of Tyre describes in 582/1186 the visit of Henry, Count of Champagne (d. 593/1197), the ruler of Jerusalem, and the husband of the widow of Conrad of Montferrat, who passed on his way from Acre to Antioch, near the territories of the Syrian Ismailis in 590/1194. Abu Mansur bin Muhammad sent deputies to welcome him, and to invite him to visit his fortress of Kahf on his return. Count Henry accepted the invitation. Abu Mansur received him with great honour. He took him to several castles and fortresses and brought him at last to one having very lofty turrets. On each look-out stood two Ismaili guards, dressed in white uniforms. Abu Mansur told the Count that these *fidais* obeyed him better than the Christians did their princes; and giving a signal, two of them instantly leaped from the top of the tower, and were dashed to pieces at its foot. "If you desire it," said Abu Mansur to the astonished Count, "all my *fidais* shall throw themselves down from the battlements in the same way." Count Henry declined and confessed that he could not expect such obedience in his servants. The spirit of self-sacrificing demonstrated before Count Henry purported to dissuade him from contemplating any ill design against the lsmailis. The historicity of this incident is however doubtful. Nevertheless, it became famous in Europe by the end of the 13th century. It is cited in the Latin history of Marino Sanudo Torsello and Francesco Pipino of Bologna. Arnold of Lubeck presents the event as a customary demonstration of loyalty in the lsmailism. Georgius Elmacin (d. 671/1273) however, erroneously transposed the event to the Iranian Ismailis of Hasan bin Sabbah.

The names of several chief *da'is* who led the Syrian Ismailis, are known to us from the inscriptions at Masiyaf, Kahf and other strongholds, vide **Epigraphie des Assassins de Syrie** (JA, 9 series, ix, 1897, pp. 453-501) by Max van Berchem (1863-1903). According to an inscription in the inner gate of the castle, a building was restored by Kamaluddin al-Hasan bin Masud. Another inscription reads that a *da'i* Majduddin received the ambassadors of Frederick II in 624/1227, bringing gifts worth almost 80,000 *dinars*. The descriptions of *da'i* Sirajuddin Muzaffar bin al-Hussain are found in the year 625/1228 and 635/1238. Tajuddin Abul Futuh bin Muhammad, an Iranian *da'i* from Alamut came in 637/1240, who built the city wall of the Masiyaf and its south gate in 646/1249 when the commander of the fortress was Abdullah bin Abil Fazal bin Abdullah. Ibn Wasil (d. 697/1298), the author of **Mufarrid al-Kurub**, a native of central Syria, was also personally acquainted with Tajuddin Abul Futuh.

An important happening in this period relates to the dealings between Tajuddin Abul Futuh bin Muhammad, the chief *da'i* in Syria and the French king Louis IX (1226-1270), who led the seventh Crusade (1249-1250). Jean de Joinville (1224-1317), the king's biographer in his **Histoire de Saint Louis** (comp. 1305) makes a record for the year 648/1250 that king Louis came in Acre in 1250 and stayed four years in Palestine after his early defeat in Egypt. The Ismaili chief *da'i* sent the Fench king: "a very well made figure of an elephant, another of an animal called giraffe, and apples of different kinds, all of which were of crystal. With these he sent gaming boards and sets of chessman. All these objects were profusely decorated with little flowers made of amber, which were attached to the crystal by delicately fashioned clips of good fine gold, a shirt and a ring." The Ismaili envoys told the king: "Sir, we have come back from our chief, who informs you that as the shirt is the part of dress nearest to the body, he sends you this, his shirt, as a gift, or a symbol that you are the king for whom he has the greatest affection, and which he is most desirous to cultivate; and, for a further assurance of it, here is his ring that he sends you, which is of pure gold, and has his name engraved on it; and with this ring our chief espouses you, and understands that henceforth you be one of the fingers of his hand."

The Ismaili envoys asked the king either to pay tribute to them or at least release them from paying tribute to the Templars and Hospitallers. The French however did not pay tribute to the Ismailis of Syria, who continued to pay their own tribute to the Templars and Hospitallers. Desiring to procure close ties with the Syrian Ismailis, the king Saint Louis responded to their peace initiative by sending his ambassadors with gifts to the Ismaili chief. This Frankish mission also included an Arabic-speaking friar, Yves the Breton. It was in the course of his meetings with the Ismaili chief Tajuddin Abul Futuh, held at Masiyaf, that Yves asked the articles of the Ismaili faith and reported back to the king as he understood. It is curious that Yves the Breton wrongly reported the king the Ismaili beliefs in nonsense, incredible and baseless colouring.

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In 624/1227, Chenghiz Khan conquered eastern region of Iran, but the Ismailis of Kohistan were unaffected by the initial phase of the operations and continued to enjoy their prosperity. On that juncture, an increasing number of the Sunni Muslim refugees, including numerous *ulema* of Khorasan, had ferruled asylum in the Ismaili towns of Kohistan. The Ismailis welcomed the flood of the refugees, and assisted them with their own resources. In Kohistan, the Ismailis maintained an island of prosperity and stability from which all benefited. The visiting Sunni jurist and historian, Minhaj Siraj Juzjani (d. 685/1286), who spent his earlier years in the services of the Ghorid dynasty in India. He visited Kohistan three times between 621/1224 and 623/1226. He writes in his **Tabaqat-i Nasiri** (comp. 658/1260) that Shihabuddin bin Mansur Abul Fateh, the learned Ismaili governor of Kohistan was lavish in his treatment to these Sunni refugees in his mountain fastnesses. He further writes in **Tabaqat-i Nasiri** (tr. by Ghulam Rasul Maher, Lahore, 1975, 2:230-31) that, "I found him a person of infinite learning with wisdom, science, and philosophy, in such wise, that a philosopher and sage like unto him there was not in the territory of Khorasan. He used greatly to cherish poor strangers and travellers; and such Muslims of Khorasan as had come into proximity with him he was wont to take under his guardianship and protection. On this account his assemblies contained some of the most distinguished of the *ulema* of Khorasan; and he had treated all of them with honour and reverence, and showed them much kindness. They stated to this effect, that, during those first two or three years of anarchy in Khorasan, one thousand honorary dresses, and seven hundred horses, with trappings, had been received from his treasury and stables by *ulema* and poor strangers."

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It is however recounted that the local Ismailis of Kohistan lodged complaints to Alamut about the negative effects of the generous hospitality from the state treasury. Thus, Shihabuddin was summoned at Alamut, and a new governor, Shamsuddin Hussain Ikhtiyar was appointed instead. The latter also came to be equally admired by the Muslim refugees because of similar lavish treatment, but he was not called back to Alamut. It evidently implies that the principal cause of the replacement was due to some other reasons. Shihabuddin himself was also a learned scholar, and his one scribe in Kohistan, called Ra'is al-Hasan bin Saleh Munshi Birjandi, had compiled the Ismaili history which was used by Rashiduddin in **Jamiut Tawarikh.**

The arrival of Shamsuddin Hasan at Kohistan marked with the outbreak of new conflicts between the Ismailis and their Sistan neighbours. Yaminuddin Bahram Shah bin Taj al-Din Harb (610-618/1213-1221), the local Nasrid chief of Sistan, had previously waged two wars against Alamut during the time of Imam Jalaluddin Hasan; and his nephew had sold the fortress of Shahanshah near the town of Nih to Alamut. Yaminuddin demanded from the Ismailis of Kohistan to give up the claim of the fortress, and threatened to capture it by force. Before the invasion of Yaminuddin on Kohistan, the four *fidais* had killed him on 5th Rabi II, 618/May 29, 1221 at Zarang.

It was followed immediately by the succession issue in Sistan among the sons of Yaminuddin. The Ismailis of Kohistan supported Ruknuddin against his younger brother Nusratuddin, whom the notables placed on the throne. Like his father, Nusratuddin continued his claim on the fortress of Shahanshah. Soon afterwards, Ruknuddin gained the throne of Sistan with the help of the Ismailis in 619/1222. In the meantime, the Mongols invaded Sistan without staying there, and Ruknuddin had also been killed by his slave. The notables of Sistan put on the throne Shihabuddin bin Harb and his brother Ali, to the dissatisfaction of the Ismailis, who again had their own candidate, Uthman Shah bin Nasiruddin Uthman. They acquired support from Khwarazmian commander, called Tajuddin Yinaltagin, who was then stationed at Kirman, for the rights of Uthman. Yinaltagin arrived in 622/1225 at Sistan with his troops, and defeated the forces of Sistan. Instead of placing Uthman on the throne, Yinaltagin retained this power with him for almost a decade.

Thus, Shamsuddin, the Ismaili governor of Kohistan commanded his forces in a battle against Yinaltagin, and inflicted a defeat to him in 623/1226. It was after this battle against Yinaltagin, who deputed Minhaj Siraj Juzjani as his envoy to conduct diplomatic negotiations with the Ismailis of Kohistan. Minhaj Siraj concluded a truce with Shamsuddin at Nih on behalf of Yinaltagin, and as a result, the Ismailis pursued an independent policy in its local affairs, and

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developed important trade route with other regions, which were the source of acceleration of their economical conditions. When Minhaj Siraj returned to Sistan after negotiations, Yinaltagin forced him to go once again to Kohistan to declare a war against the Ismailis, but he did not consent to set out on a second journey, as he had determined upon undertaking a journey into India. This refusal did not meet with the approval of Yinaltagin and he commanded to detain him for 43 days in the fort of Safhad of Sistan and prohibited his going beyond the walls.

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In the meantime, Alamut gave refuge to Ozbeg's son, Malik Khamush, and to Jalaluddin's brother Ghiasuddin, who were dismissed from their posts by the Khwarazmshah in 625/1228. The Ismailis helped Ghiasuddin despite the Khawarazmian blockade of Rudhbar, but he was there murdered.

In 625/1228, while the Ismaili envoy Badruddin was travelling east across the Oxus to Mongol court, Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah ordered at once to stop all the caravans in that direction, pretending that a Mongol envoy was on his way to Syria in the company of some Ismailis. In compliance, his *vizir* Sharaf al-Mulk put to death in Azerbaijan a westward Syrian Ismaili caravan of seventy merchants. Hence, Alamut sent an emissary to the Khwarazmshah, demanding successfully retrieval of the goods taken from the murdered Syrian Ismailis. In the meantime, Ghiasuddin took flight from Alamut which had enraged Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah.

The pact between Imam Jalaluddin Hasan and the Mongols, as hinted by Juvaini and explicitly described by Rashiduddin, became impaired afterwards. In 635/1238, Imam Alauddin Muhammad dispatched an embassy, in cooperation with the Abbasid caliph al-Mustansir (d. 640/1242) to Louis IX (d. 1270), the king of France, and Henry III (d. 1272), the king of England, to report the incoming stormy inroads of the Mongols, and to evaluate possibility of an alliance with the Christian West against the Mongols. Mathew Paris (d. 1259) has written in his **Chronica Majora** (ed. by Henry R. Luard, London, 1876, 3:487-9) the account of this embassy in England. The Bishop of Winchester, who was present at the audience, interrupted the envoy's appeal with harsh words, reflecting the hostile policy of the church against the Muslims.

After this rebuff by the West, the Ismailis made their final approach to the Mongol's court. In summer of 643/1246, on the enthronement of Guyuk (1246-1248), the next new Mongol's chief; Imam Alauddin Muhammad, along with the Abbasid caliph al-Mustasim (640-656/1242-1258) and many other Muslim rulers, sent a mission in the Khangai mountains in Central Mongolia. The Ismaili ambassadors, Shihabuddin and Shamsuddin, the former governors of Kohistan delivered a memorandum to Guyuk. Neither they nor the Abbasid ambassador were well received, and on that juncture, the Mongol demonstrated a negative attitude towards the Muslim rules.

Soon afterwards, Guyuk dispatched Eligidei to Iran at the head of reinforcements for the Mongol armies already stationing there, with instructions to assume supreme command in reducing the Muslim holds, beginning with Alamut. Guyuk intended to follow after, but his death prevented the operations, which was charged some six years later, to his nephew and successor Mongke (1251-1259), who appointed his brother Halagu (1256-1265) to command an army to Iran, Iraq and Egypt according to the resolution of the Mongol National Assembly (*quriltai*) held in 649/1251. Halagu did not reach Iran before the beginning of 654/1256, but had dispatched an advance army of 12,000 men from Mongolia in 650/1252 in command of Ket-Buqa to join with the Mongol garrison already camping in Iran. Ket-Buqa crossed the Oxus in 651/1253 and soon afterwards, attacked the Ismaili strongholds in Kohistan. His troops drove off the cattle of the people of Tun, Turshiz and Zir-kuh and slaughtered and pillaged throughout that region. The towns of Tun and Turshiz were however captured, but the Ismailis recovered Tun very soon. Ket-Buqa also reached at the foot of Girdkuh with 5,000 men, where he constructed elaborate siege works, digging a trench around the castle, and erecting a wall around the trench. The men then formed a ring behind that wall, and a second wall and a trench were constructed around the men, so that they were apparently left secure in the middle with no possibility of attack from either side.

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Leaving his officer, Buri with the charge of siege at Girdkuh, Ket-Buqa proceeded to attack the castle of Mihrin, near Girdkuh and Shahdiz. In Shawal, 651/December, 1253, the Ismaili garrison of Girdkuh made a valiant nocturnal assault on the Mongols, killing a hundred of them, including Buri. The siege however continued and in the interim, the disease of cholera broke out in the summer of 652/1254. It was reported to Alamut that most of the garrisons were perishing and the castle was on the verge of falling. Imam Alauddin Muhammad immediately supplied reinforcements, including his three officers at the head of 110 men, each carrying a load of two maunds of *henna* (Latin Lawsonia *inermis*, Arabic *hinna*, the shrub) and three maunds of salt. The garrison's stock of salt had been exhausted, and as for the *henna*, we are told by the author of **Jamiut Tawarikh**, himself a physician, that there had not been prescribed in the books of medicine that *henna* was a drug against cholera. The people of Girdkuh had an experience however that once water being scarce, some of them had drunk that *henna* water and were cured. It was for this reason that they had asked for *henna* from Alamut. The 110 men forced their way through the ranks of the besiegers, suffering only a single casualty; one of them fell into the trench and dislocated his leg; his comrades lifted him on to their shoulders and carried him into the castle. The garrison, thus restored to its full strength, and continued its resistance until 659/1270.

Halagu was yet in Samarkand and was about to cross Oxus on the eve of the death of Imam Alauddin Muhammad, who, according to Peter Brent, might have been strong enough to resist for a long time against the Mongols, vide **The Mongol Empire** (London, 1976, p. 135)

Shamsuddin bin Ahmad al-Tayyibi (592-652/1195-1254) was an eminent Ismaili poet in Syria. He travelled excessively in Iran and visited Alamut during the period of Imam Alauddin Muhammad, where he served as a court-poet. His poetical works are not accessible. He left Alamut most probably after the death of Imam Alauddin Muhammad, and returned to Syria, where he died.

Imam Alauddin Muhammad's rule was long and prosperous. It was a period of both intellectual and political activity. The glory of his rule was the patronage of science and learning, attracted a bulk of scholars from outside. He was fond of shepherding and used to visit the villages to help the people in their dairy products and the cattle breeding. His old enemies conspired through his close advisor, Hasan Mazandaran, who killed the Imam on 29th Shawal, 653/December 1, 1255. His body was found at midnight in a wooden hut, near his sheep-fold in the village of Shirkuh in the western part of the district of Alamut. Imam Alauddin Muhammad had many sons whose detail is not accessible. It is however known from Juvaini that Shahanshah, Shiranshah and Iranshah were his sons, and the elder one was Ruknuddin Khurshah, who was consigned the office of Imamate.

RUKNUDDIN KHURSHAH (653-655/1255-1257), 27TH IMAM

Ruknuddin Hasan, surnamed Khurshah was born in 627/1230. He is also known as Kahirshah. When he was still a child, his father had declared him as his successor. Juvaini was not tired to adulterate the Nizarid line of Imamate, but at one place he curiously admits (p. 663), "And today, the leader (Ruknuddin Khurshah) of the heretics (the misnomer used for the Ismailis) of Alamut traces his descent from this son (of Nizar).

His father, Imam Alauddin Muhammad had taken due care of rudiments of his formal education at home under personal care. When he grew young, his father designated him his deputy to investigate few cases of disorders in some castles with instructions to obey his orders as his own. In 653/1255, before his father's death, he is reported to have visited Syria with a letter of his father. Strict protection had been given to Imam Ruknuddin, and wherever he went, a small unit of armed men accompanied him as security guards. It is related that he stayed more than a year in the castles of Rudhbar and Kohistan for making fresh administrative fabric, and thus the enemies of the Ismailis smacked of exaggerations that his relation had been deteriorated with his father.

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Three days later, having assumed the Imamate, Imam Ruknuddin sent an army which his father had ordered against Shal-Rud in the district of Khalkhal. The Ismaili forces occupied the castle after a small fighting.

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The Ismailis continued to retain good relation with the Abbasids and Khwarazamshah. Alauddin Khwarazmshah (d. 617/1220) and Jalaluddin Khwarazamshah (d. 628/1231) were very proud of their wealth and grandeur and their relations with the Abbasids and the Ismailis became deteriorated and fell into a swift decline. The Mongol routed the empire of Khwarazmshah in 628/1231 with no difficulty, because no Muslim power came to help them. The kingdom of Khwarazmshahis was founded by Anushtagin (1077-1097). This dynasty ruled for 153 years from 471/1079 to 628/1231 and produced 8 rulers belonging to seven generations.

Hence, only two big powers remained in existence in Islamic world, i.e., the Abbasids and the Alamut.

One of the first acts of Imam Ruknuddin's reign was to send an envoy to Yasa'ur Noyan, the Mongol commander camping at Hamdan. Yasa'ur replied in this context that Imam Ruknuddin should present himself in person before Halagu, whose arrival was now imminent. This was the first of a long series of messages exchanged in 654/1256 between the Ismailis and the Mongols.

In Zilhaja, 653/January, 1256, Halagu crossed the Oxus and passed the winter in the meadows of Shafurqan to the west of Balkh. The Russian orientalist Wilhelm Barthold has computed the army of Halagu at about 129,000 men and a thousand Chinese artificers, who were skilled in the construction of military machines and in preparing and using every species of inflammable substances for attacking walled towns and fortified strongholds. Halagu entered Iran through Khorasan in Rabi I, 654/April, 1256 and conquered Tun and proceeded towards Tus. During the Mongol operations, the Ismailis held about 360 mountain castles and strongholds.

In Jamada I, 654/May, 1256, Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah had sent his brother, Shahanshah with a delegation to announce his submission to the Mongols. They met Yasa'ur near Qazwin, and Imam Ruknuddin delegated his own son to accompany the Ismaili mission thence to Halagu. Nine days later, Yasa'ur not only detained Shahanshah, but also invaded the Rudhbar without any reason to demonstrate Mongol's power and attacked the Ismaili forces on a mountain top behind Alamut, but he was forced to withdraw after a short while. He then vacated the whole region upon instructions from Halagu, who had now received Imam Ruknuddin's embassy at Quchan. Halagu professed his satisfaction with Alamut's embassy and his own ambassadors reached Imam Ruknuddin at the end of Jamada II/July and delivered a decree, full of encouragement and benevolence, insisting to demolish his castle and come in person. Imam Ruknuddin did in fact destroy some castles. He also demolished the gates coated with lead and removed the battlements and turrets of Alamut, Lamasar and Maimundiz. The Mongol ambassadors, accompanied by Imam Ruknuddin's envoy Sadruddin returned to report the situation to Halagu. Imam Ruknuddin is said to have asked a year's grace before presenting himself. In the beginning of Shaban/September, the Mongol envoy came with a new proposal that the Ismaili Imam should immediately present before Halagu, and in his absence a Mongol, named Tukel Bahadur would act as a caretaker governor in Rudhbar. Imam Ruknuddin sent his reply through an embassy led by his *vizir*, Shamsuddin Gilaki and Saifuddin Sultan Malik, who accompanied the Mongol ambassador and reached Halagu on 17th Shaban/September 9, asking for a year's grace and exemption of Alamut and Lamasar from the demolition order, but the Mongol demonstrated their impatience.

Halagu now set out from his encampment near Bastam to launch his assault on the Ismaili strongholds in Rudhbar. The main Mongol force proceeded from different directions. The right wing of Halagu forces led by Buqa Taymur and Koke-Ilgei advanced by way of Mazandaran. The left wing under the Chaghatai prince Teguder and Ket-Buqa proceeded through Simnan and Khuvar. While Halagu himself with the principal army, followed parallel route leading through Firozkuh, Damavand and Ray. He alighted at Damavand for a while and sent yet another message

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to Imam Ruknuddin. The Imam was asked to come at once to Damavand, and were he to be delayed upto five days by his preparations, he was to send his son in advance. Imam Ruknuddin dispatched his son on 17th Ramzan/October 8. Halagu returned the boy and suggested that if Imam Ruknuddin could not come till later, he should send another brother to relieve Shahanshah. On 5th Shawal/October 26, Imam Ruknuddin sent out his brother Shiranshah with 300 men, who arrived at Halagu's camp two days later.

Meanwhile, *vizir* Shamsuddin Gilaki had returned from Girdkuh and brought its governor, the Qadi Tajuddin Mardanshah, before Halagu, while Girdkuh still held out. Shahanshah was relieved and sent back to Rudhbar with the message that if Imam Ruknuddin demolished the castle of Maimundiz and presented himself in a person before Halagu, he would be received with honour and given immunity. By this time, the Mongol armies entered Rudhbar from all sides. Halagu set out from his base at Piskildara on 10th Shawal/October 31 and advanced towards Rudhbar through Taliqan.

On 18th Shawal/November 8, Halagu encamped on the hilltop opposite Maimundiz. The Mongol armies began to prepare for a siege. The Ismaili forces gained initial victories and rained down stones from their own mangonels upon the besiegers. The Ismaili warriors using the mangonels, were made with a pole of hard wood raised in a slanting position, supported by a strut at a point a quarter of its height from the top, and fixed in the ground at some distance from the main pole so as to support it. At the top of the pole was the emplacement for the axle to which the shaft was attached.

On the second day of fighting, the Mongols brought into a play a Chinese ballista with a range of 2,500 paces. The garrisons of Maimundiz now ceased fighting and asked for truce, which was granted. Meanwhile, on 25th Shawal/November 15, the Mongols resumed their bombardment on Maimundiz on large scale. The Ismailis strained every nerve to meet the situation and the danger hovering on their door, but they found themselves utterly helpless in the face of these nomadic hordes that poured down into the Ismaili territories like ants and locusts. At length, Imam Ruknuddin asked for a *yarligh*, granting him self-conduct. He first sent down his son and another brother Iranshah with a delegation of nobles and on Sunday, the 29th Shawal, 654/November 19, 1256, he himself dismounted from the castle, embosomed with a group of dignitaries including Nasiruddin Tusi, Khwaja Asiluddin Zuzani and the *vizir* Muayyaduddin. He was however well received by Halagu.

At Halagu's request, Imam Ruknuddin sent his representatives with the Mongol envoys to all the castles in Rudhbar, instructing for their destruction. Some forty castles were thus demolished. Halagu proceeded to the foot of Alamut, whose Ismaili commander was Muqadinuddin. Leaving Balaghai behind to besiege Alamut with a large force, Halagu then set out for Lamasar. After a few days, the garrison of Alamut dismounted. Berthold Spuler writes in **The Muslim World** (London, 1969, 2:18) that, "The fortress Alamut offered a desperate resistance to the onslaughts of the Central Asian hordes and only succumbed after a prolong siege." Towards the end of Zilkada, 654/December, 1256, all the persons in Alamut came down with all their goods and belongings and after three days, the Mongols climbed up to the castle and seized whatever those people had been unable to carry off. They also plundered freely whatever they found in the castle, and then set fire to its building and its library. Meanwhile, Ata Malik Juvaini, who had accompanied Halagu to the foot of Lamasar, had been granted permission to inspect the library. He saved a number of choice books, including some Ismaili works, as well as certain astronomical instruments, before consigning the library to flames. Thus, the accumulated literary treasure of about two centuries was consumed to ashes. Juvaini himself writes, "I burnt them all" (*basukh tam*). Edward G. Browne termed it, "world's renowned library." Arif Tamir writes in **Khams Rasail Ismailiyya** (Beirut, 1956, p. 195) that, "The Mongol destroyed the Ismaili library containing one and one half million volumes."

Meanwhile, at Lamasar, Halagu had failed to induce the surrender despite the services of Imam Ruknuddin as intercessor. He left Dayir Buqa to beleaguer it with an army, but it did not surrender until 1258. He quitted Rudhbar on 13th Zilhaja, 655/January 4, 1257 and reached his

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encampment at Hamdan. On 22nd Zilhaja/January 13, Imam Ruknuddin's family and servants were billeted in Qazwin, but he himself accompanied Halagu. From here, on Halagu's request, Imam Ruknuddin sent his emissaries to the Ismaili castles in Syria, instructing them to guard the castles as subjects of Halagu until such time as he himself should arrive there.

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Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah is reported to have married a Mongolian woman at the encampment of Halagu in Hamdan. He remained with Halagu for about 3 months and 23 days after the fall of Maimundiz. In the beginning of March, 1257, Halagu sent an embassy to the Abbasid caliph Mustasim, asking for submission. It seems probable that Imam Ruknuddin must have conceived the forthcoming terrible onslaught of the Mongols against the Abbasids, and therefore, he intended to quit the company of Halagu before the operations. Since Lamasar and Girdkuh had not been surrendered, therefore, Imam Ruknuddin was continued to be treated with honour. Imam Ruknuddin sought permission from Halagu to see Mongke in Karakorum. He must have been taken to their operations against the Abbasids, had he not quitted the company of Halagu at Hamdan, and it would have led the enemies of the Ismailis to cultivate another story that the operations against Baghdad had been launched on the directions of the Ismaili Imam. Imam Ruknuddin however succeeded to leave Hamdan for Karakorum.

On 1st Rabi I, 655/March 9, 1257, Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah set out from Hamdan with nine companions and a group of Mongols led by Bujrai. On the way, when they arrived at the foot of Girdkuh, which was not yet surrendered, Imam Ruknuddin tried once again to bring down the castle's garrisons. He was however suspected that he had told them secretly not to surrender, and as a result, he was not treated well henceforward by his escorts. Our sources do not give the route leading to Karakorum, but it seems that they alighted at Bukhara and proceeded about 150 miles to the east for Samarkand, and thence reached to Karakorum.

It is worthy of note from the accounts of **The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World** (tr. William W. Rockhill, London, 1900, p. 222) that King Louis IX (d. 1270) of France had tried to secure an alliance with the Mongols against the Muslims. In pursuit, he had sent William of Rubruck (1215-1295), a Flemish Franciscan on a diplomatic mission under the garb of church, at the court of Mongke (d. 1257) in the year 1253. William of Rubruck reached Karakorum on December 25, and visited the court of Mongke on January 4, 1254. He noticed strict security measures in the court, because it had been informed to Mongke, possibly a rumour that was going about that forty Ismaili *fidais* had entered the city to kill him. It is, however, much nearer to reasonable possibility that the detention of Imam Ruknuddin in Karakorum would have proved a good hand to Mongke, to force the so called forty hiding *fidais* to surrender. Why Mongke did not detain Imam Ruknuddin and also refuse to see him? It is most likelihood that Mongke was yet unaware of his arrival. It is, of course, possible to draw some inferences that the so called messenger from Mongke was forged by Bujrai according to a pre-arranged policy, informing Imam Ruknuddin that Mongke did not wish to see him, which sounds in **Jamiut Tawarikh** (p. 37) that, "When the news reached Mongke that Ruknuddin was coming, he said, 'why is he being brought and why are post horses being tired unnecessarily?' He sent a messenger with instructions that he should be made away." In contrast, it is very dissimilar with Juvaini's account that Imam Ruknuddin actually reached Karakorum, and Mongke remarked, "It is unnecessary to bring him on so long a journey." He refused to accept his presence and dismissed with the charge: "Seeing that you claim to be *il* (friend), why have you not destroyed certain castles such as Girdkuh and Lamasar? You must go back and when you have dismounted those castles, you shall again have the honour of *tikishmishi*" i.e., an audience with a ruler at which one hands over presents (2:724). Juvaini was in Baghdad at that time, therefore, he seems to have derived his informations from oral channel, and with this the description of **Jamiut Tawarikh** (p. 37) cannot be convincing. Under any circumstances, it is difficult to determine with any exactitude that Mongke was aware of Imam Ruknuddin's arrival in Karakorum. The resistance of the garrisons of Girdkuh, including Bujrai's suspicion on Imam Ruknuddin seem to have been reported secretly back to Halagu at Hamdan. It is therefore, possible that Halagu had changed his mind later when Imam Ruknuddin had passed through Girdkuh for Karakorum, and had routed his immediate instructions to Bujrai not to arrange Imam Ruknuddin's meeting with Mongke. Since Imam Ruknuddin had been granted a self-

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conduct which was operative within the territories of Iran only, therefore, his murder out of Iran became validated for Halagu.

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When Imam Ruknuddin had left Iran for Karakorum, there had taken place a wild massacre of the Iranian Ismailis, who were in Mongol's custody. His family and dependents detained at Qazwin were also put to the sword by Qaraqai Bitikchi. Another cruel Mongol commander, called Otegu summoned the Ismailis of Kohistan to throng at one place, and butchered some 12,000 of them. W. Montgomery Watt however writes in his **Islamic Philosophy and Theology** (Edinburgh, 1985, pp. 153-4) that, "The fall of Alamut to the Mongols in 1256 was followed by massacres, but many Ismailites survived and the son of the last Imam was preserved safely in hiding." When Halagu had finished his merciless operations, he decided to kill Imam Ruknuddin out of Iran, through his envoy Bujrai.

Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah started his homeland journey from Karakorum after failing to see Mongke. His party, after travelling for about 400 kilometers, reached at the Khangai mountain, one of the three major mountain belts in the north of Mongolia, called also as Hangayn or Changai. On the edge of Khangai, where the route for Samarkand radiated, Imam Ruknuddin and his companions were dismounted and led away from the road, on the pretext of going to a Mongolian feast, and were killed in brutality.

Imam Ruknuddin had also taken his Mongolian wife with him as it was not possible to leave her alone in Hamdan, or send at Qazwin, where his family members were detained. Moreover, the presence of a Mongolian wife would have procured an impression upon Mongke as a token of friendship. The isolated chains of later traditions may have been embellished by narrators, but in essence it seems to be true that she had been spared and left alone. The Mongol party fled to Samarkand after killing Imam Ruknuddin and his companions. They also pillaged the treasures of Imam Ruknuddin and took a wild flight after leaving her alone. She had a small caravan of few horses and with them, she wandered and loitered all alone. It was yet danger to follow the tract leading to Samarkand, therefore, she proceeded south-east region, and finally landed at the mountainous regions of Pamir inside the Gorno-Badakhshan, and nothing else is known about her. It seems fairly certain that her caravan must have been loaded with important documents or literary materials that most possibly remained with Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah. It is more likely that the important historical documents and the manuscripts retained with Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah were unscathed and would have been in the Pamirs in Tajikistan. This however cannot be accepted as conclusively proven, but it does appear to be at least a likelihood. We do not pursue the matter any further here, but it deserves close examination.

Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah remained as a ruler of Alamut for one year, and lived for another year, means the period of his Imamate was for two years. Thus, the Nizari Ismaili rule lasted for about 170 years in Alamut. Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah was succeeded by his son, Shamsuddin Muhammad, who had been privily sent away in Azerbaijan.

SHAMSUDDIN MUHAMMAD (655-710/1257-1310), 28TH IMAM

Imam Shams al-Din Muhammad is said to have born in 646/1230 in the fortress of Maimundiz. He was known as Agha Shams in Syria and Shah Shams in India. He is also known as Shamsu'l Haq in few Iranian poems. Poet Nizari Kohistani (d. 720/1320) called him Shamsuddin Shah Nimroz Ali and Shah Shams, also known as Shams Zardozi due to residing in the village, called Zardoz in Azerbaijan, but another tradition suggests that he had adopted profession of embroidery, the term *zardoz* (embroiderer) became his epithet.

Ata Malik Juvaini wrongly considers the butchery of the Ismailis conducted by the Mongols in Qazwin and Rudhbar following the reduction of Alamut, as an end of the Ismailis and the

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unbroken line of the Imamate as well. It is however, ascertained from few manuscripts that Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad had left the fortress of Maimundiz probably on 11th Shawal, 654/November 1, 1256; and the Mongols reached there on 17th Shawal, 654/November 7, 1256; while Juvaini joined the Mongols after 12th Zilkada, 654/December 2, 1256.

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According to Bernard Lewis in **The Assassins** (London, 1967, p. 63), "The extirpation of the Ismailis in Persia was not quite as thorough as Juvaini suggests. In the eyes of the sectarians, Rukn al-Din's small son succeeded him as Imam on his death and lived to sire a line of Imams." Marshall Hodgson also writes in **The Order of Assassins** (Netherland, 1955. pp. 270 and 275) that, "Juvaini assures himself that every Ismaili was killed; yet even if all the members of garrison were in fact killed, a great many other will have escaped." He further adds, "but their spirit was more nearly indomitable; as it is from among them that the great future of Nizari Ismailism sprouted again. It is said the child Imam was carried to Adharbayjan, where the Imams lived for some time." According to W. Montgomery Watt in **Islam and the Integration of Society** (London, 1961, p. 77), "In 1256, Alamut was surrounded, and was destroyed and in the following year the Imam met his death and there was a widespread massacre of the Nizaris. It may be further mentioned that, despite this catastrophe and the fact that it has never since had a territory of its own, the community was not exterminated and the line of Imams was maintained unbroken."

Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad went to Daylam, and thence moved to Ardabil. It is said that he also lived in Ahar, about 150 miles west of Ardabil. He had been also in Tabriz, which he most possibly evacuated in the early months of 1257 as Halagu invaded Tabriz on July 26, 1257. It seems that he became known as Shams Tabriz in the Sufic circle in Tabriz. Pir Shihabuddin Shah (d. 1884) writes in **Khitabat-i Alliya** (Tehran, 1963, p. 42) that, "Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad who lived in Tabriz, was compared by the local people to the sun, because of his handsome countenance, and thus he came to be called Shams (the sun) of Tabriz. This gave rise to the confusion between him and Shams Tabrizi, the master of Jalaluddin Rumi, but they were always in reality two different persons."

The tradition has it that Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad most probably lived from one to another place under different mantles in the province of Azerbaijan. The veritable locality of his residence, however, has not been substantiated. Azerbaijan was a big province spread over 104000 square kilometers, bounded on the south-east by Jibal, on the south-west by the eastern Jazira, on the west by Armenia, on the north by Arren, and on the east by shore-lands of the Caspian Sea and Gilan. The Turkomans thickly populated the north-eastern part of the province, and the Kurds inhabited the south-western. Azerbaijan was an ideal land for the growing Sufi circles, and the Imam had settled in northern region with his family, where he professed in the embroidery works.

Halagu seized Aleppo in 658/1260, while his commander, Ket-Buqa made his triumphal entry in Damascus on Rabi I, 658/March, 1260. It was the same year that four Ismaili strongholds, including Masiyaf were surrendered to the Mongols. Halagu had to return to Iran upon hearing the news of Mongke's death in 657/1259. On 25th Ramzan, 658/September 3, 1260, the Mongols suffered a drastic defeat at Ayn Jalut at the hands of the Mamluk armies of Egypt. Ket-Buqa was taken prisoner and scourged to death. Ayn Jalut destroyed the Mongol power and kept the pagan hordes out of Egypt and the Maghrib. Soon afterwards, the Mongols were expelled from Syria, where the Mamluk sultan Baybars emerged as the ruling power, and became the ruler of Egypt and Syria. The Ismailis evidently collaborated with the Mamluk sultan and other Muslim rulers in repelling the Mongols from Syria, and recovered their four strongholds.

The Ismailis in Iran, however, became absolutely disorganized and disoriented. Despite the repressions and debacles, the Ismailis' fortune continued to rise gradually in Iran. Those who managed to survive the Mongol massacres in Rudhbar and Kohistan, had entered a new era of their history. They mostly had taken refuge in obscurity, cloaked by the forms of a Sufi *tariqah*, and most of them referred to their spiritual leader not as an Imam but as a Pir for many years. The underground existence of the Ismailis did not attract the attention of the historians, who like

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Juvaini, also wrote that the Mongols had completely extirpated the Nizari Ismailis in Iran. It however appears that many of them had escaped the main brunt of the Mongol onslaughts and did exist in Kohistan, Daylam, Rudhbar etc. A facsimile of a manuscript dating 690/1290 composed by Wahid al-Muluk, unearthed by Sir E. Denison Ross (cf. Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1931, 2:202), indicating that, "In Persia, the Ismaili communities were decimated by massacre, but survived after the surrender of Alamut and other fortresses in Daylam and Kohistan." Nizari Kohistani (d. 720/1320) very watchfully describes the survival of the Ismailis in Kohistan, Birjand, Rudhbar etc. in his **Kulliyat**, a manuscript in the Institute of Language and Literature of the Academy of Science of the Tajik. Mustapha Qazwini compiled his **Nuzhat al-Qulub** in 740/1340 also gives a condensed account of Rudhbar in Mazandaran, whose inhabitants were Ismailis. The Ismailis also lived in Gilan, probably in the mantle of the local Sufis. H.L. Rabino writes in **Rulers of Gilan** (JRAS, 1920, 3:294) that, "It is generally believed that the fall of castle of Alamut in 654/1256 marks the end of the Ismaili influence in Gilan. This is a great mistake. Either the destruction of Alamut cannot have a complete as reported by the Persian writers, or the castle was rebuilt."

Yet, Lamasar held out for another year before cholera broke out and killed the bulk of garrison. The few who survived the epidemic had no alternative but to surrender in 655/1258. The valiant garrison of Girdkuh however continued to resist its Mongol besiegers for 13 years after the reduction of Alamut. The final surrender had taken place on 29th Rabi II, 669/December 15, 1270.

The great Khan Kubilai (1260-1294), absorbed in the administration of China, and lost interest in the western provinces. He was happy that Iran should be governed by his brother Halagu (1256-1265), on whom he bestowed the title of *Il-Khan* (tribal khan, local khan or subordinate khan), which all the descendants of Halagu were to assume. Halagu thus founded in Iran the Il-Khanid dynasty (1265-1335). He died in February 8, 1265 and was succeeded by his seven successors one after another, namely Abaqa (1265-1282), Takudar (1282-1284), Arghun (1284-1291), Gaykhatu (1291-1295), Ghazan (1295-1304), Uljaytu (1304-1316) and Abu Sa'id (1317-1334). With the death of Abu Sa'id the Illkhanid dynasty in Iran virtually came to an end.

In the time of Imam Alauddin Muhammad (d. 653/1255), the Mongols were spurring to their operations against Alamut. Shamsuddin, the chief Qadi of Qazwin had also lodged false allegations against Alamut at the court of Mongke (1251-1258) in Mongolia. Halagu was therefore charged the main Mongol expedition of Iran. On other side, Shamsuddin, the chief Qadi of Qazwin, after returning from Mongolia, assailed in bitter sarcasms against Alamut in Qazwin, giving also high tidings of the arrival of the Mongols. The frightened Muslims began to evacuate the vicinity of Rudhbar and Kohistan during the period of Imam Alauddin Muhammad to escape the brunt of the Mongols. The stampede of the Muslims had also carried away with them the latest report that **"Alauddin Muhammad is the ruler of Alamut, and the Mongols are about to come to reduce Alamut."** These Muslims ultimately settled down far from the Alamut territory, where they came to know the fall of Alamut. On that juncture, they seem to have generalized an image in minds that the **"Alamut's fall would have been taken place in the time of Imam Alauddin Muhammad,"** incorporating the then report they had brought from their villages. This report received credence in some circles, ignoring palpably the rule of Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah followed by Imam Alauddin Muhammad. When the Mongol storms diffused in Iran, the historicity of Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah began to be floated itself. But, it seems that the above report prevailed many years in Qazwin, Daylam and Tabriz, making Imam Alauddin Muhammad as the last ruler of Alamut, which also curiously sounds in the account of Marco Polo (1254-1324), who had heard from them in 671/1272. Marco Polo writes: "I will tell you his story just as I Messer Marco, have heard it told by many people.... The Shaikh was called in their language Alaodin.... So they were taken, and the Shaikh, Alaodin, was put to death with all his men." (**The Travels of Marco Polo,** London, 1958, pp. 40-42).

When Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad had been in Tabriz, he became known as Shams Tabriz. There had been another contemporary Shams-i Tabriz, the master of Jalaluddin Rumi (d. 672/1273), who was not traceable after 645/1247 in Koniya. It is therefore possible that Imam

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Shamsuddin Muhammad had cloaked his identity in Tabriz under the name of the master of Jalaluddin Rumi. Rida Quli Khan (d. 1872) writes in **Majmau'l Fusaha** that, "Shaikh Abu Hamid Awhadu'ddin Kirmani had seen and met Shams-i Tabriz in Tabriz." To this we must add the likelihood that Shaikh Abu Hamid had actually seen Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad in the mantle of Shams-i Tabriz. When Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad was identified as the "son of the last ruler of Alamut", he was made the "son of Alauddin Muhammad," incorporating him in the above report.

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A cloud of mystery has surrounded the life of another contemporary Shams-i Tabriz, the master of Jalaluddin Rumi after 645/1247. Shamsuddin Aflaki, who wrote in 754/1353 that the death of Shams-i Tabriz took place in Koniya in 645/1247. It seems that a group of the Sufis had cultivated a story that after leaving Koniya, Shams-i Tabriz had gone to Tabriz, and there Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad, known as Shams Tabriz had been identified as same Shams-i Tabriz after few years. Thus, Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad began to be equated with that of Shams-i Tabriz, and henceforward, two Shams Tabriz at one period were confounded.

When the people conclusively identified Imam Ruknuddin Khurshah as the last ruler, most probably after 671/1272, one another tradition seems to have originated to distinguish these two characters. Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad was deleted from that story from being the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad, but Shams-i Tabriz was made known as the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad instead. Being influenced with this tradition, Daulatshah (d. 900/1494) was the first to show Shams-i Tabriz, the master of Jalaluddin Rumi as the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad, in his **Tazkertu'sh Shu'ara**. A question then arises, who was Shams-i Tabriz? He indeed was an Ismaili, the master of Jalaluddin Rumi, but not the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad. As to the early life of Shams-i Tabriz, we are yet in dark. Shamsuddin Aflaki (710-754/1310-1354) in **Manaqibu'l Arifin** and Abdur Rahman Jami (d. 898/1493) in **Nafhatu'l Uns** concur that Shams-i Tabriz was the son of a certain Muhammad bin Ali bin Malikad. Rida Quli Khan (d. 1872) in his **Majmau'l Fusaha** also relied on Aflaki and Jami. According to **Silsilatu'ad-Dhahab**, it is wrong to allege Shams-i Tabriz to have been the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad. It was only Daulatshah, who made him the son of Imam Alauddin Muhammad. Prof. Muhammad Iqbal of Punjab University, who prepared the Lahore edition of Daulatshah's work, makes his remarks that: "...it is evident that Daulatshah has not written historical facts carefully in his book. He has accepted all sorts of traditions, right or wrong, owing to which several errors have crept into his work." Edward G. Browne writes in **A Literary History of Persia** (3:436) that, "This is an entertaining but inaccurate work, containing a good selection of historical errors."

It is also curious that Daulatshah quoted another tradition of parentage of Shams-i Tabriz that, "Some people say that he was originally a native of Khorasan and belonged to the town of Bazar. His father had settled in Tabriz for the purpose of doing business in cloth." It is probable that Shams-i Tabriz was the son of Muhammad bin Ali bin Malikad according to Aflaki and Jami, and he seems to be a native of Khorasan as per another tradition cited by Daulatshah. Nurullah Shustari (d. 1019/1610) in his **Majalis al-Mominin** (6:291) states that Shams-i Tabriz descended from "Ismaili headman" (*da'iyani Ismailiyya budand*). His father had settled in Tabriz, and was a cloth merchant. Shams-i Tabriz was indeed an Ismaili like his father.

There is also a reason to believe that Jalaluddin Rumi must have known both Shams-i Tabriz and Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad, but did not described palpably in his **Diwan**. He however addresses Shams as the heir of the Prophet (verse no. 2473) and compares him to Ali (verse no.1944), which seems to have been referred only to the Imam.

Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad is reported to have betrothed to a Sufi lady at Daylam in 675/1276, or next year. His sons, Momin Shah and Kiya Shah operated Ismaili mission as far as Gilan. Momin Shah also visited Syria as a *hujjat* of the Imam. When he returned to Gilan, a section of the Syrian Ismailis, considered him the Imam's successor, who later on, became known as the Momin-Shahis. Muhibb Ali Qunduzi however writes in **Irshadu't Talibin** (comp. in 929/1523) that, "The schism took place after the death of Momin Shah in 738/1338." The descendants of Momin Shah mostly lived in Khwand, a village in Qazwin, where they became

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known as *Sadat-i Khwandia*. Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad died in 710/1310 in Azerbaijan after vesting the office of Imamate in Kassim Shah.

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KASSIM SHAH (710-771/1310-1370), 29TH IMAM

Imam Kassim Shah, known as Syed Kassim Muhammad was most probably born in Daylam. He is said to have lived shortly in Armenia and Anatolia in the circle of the Bekhtashahis, a growing Sufi order in the Kurds and Turkomans. The tradition most possibly of later period indicates that Imam Kassim Shah had flourished a small village in Azerbaijan, called Kassimabad, which seems almost doubtful. It is however probable that the village, in which Imam Kassim Shah either resided, or where he used to see his followers, was termed, Kassimabad by the Iranian followers. It is also believed that when his son, Islam Shah had arrived at Kahek in Iran in 798/1396, the Iranian Ismailis had also termed Kassimabad as the abode of Islam Shah's father.

Ghazan Khan (1295-1304), the sixth Ilkhanid ruler had embraced Islam, and restored peace in Iran. He was succeeded by his brother Uljaytu (1304-1316), who professed Christianity like his mother. He invaded Gilan, Mazandaran and Khorasan, putting many Ismailis to sword. He at last became a Shi'a Muslim, and was succeeded by his twelve years son, Abu Sa'id (1316-1334). Finally, Amir Hussain founded the Jalayirid dynasty at Tabriz in 736/1336, which also ended in 812/1409. In Ispahan and Shiraz, Muzaffaruddin Muhammad, the son of Sharafuddin Muzaffar (d. 754/1353) founded the Muzaffarid dynasty in 713/1313, which lasted till 795/1393. The Kurts of Herat also rose in 643/1245, and Taymurlame also became a powerful ruler in 783/1381 by conquering Iran.

The scattered Ismailis slowly began in settling down in the towns and villages of Iran. Few among them in northern area had concentrated their efforts at Daylam, one of the largest districts of Gilan. Daylam was occupied and ruled by Kiya Saifuddin Kushayji in 760/1360 at Marjikuli. He was deep-rooted in Ismaili faith like his forefathers since the period of Imam Alauddin Muhammad. He was however forced to abandon Ismailism through a letter by the Zaidi Syed Ali Kiya bin Amir Malati, the neighboring ruler. Zahiruddin Mar'ashi (d. 892/1486) writes in his **Tarikh-i Gilan wa Daylamistan** (Tehran, 1968, p. 67) that Kiya Saifuddin replied indignantly to the messenger, declaring his family's faith openly: "My ancestors followed the religion of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), and were followers and believers in the Syeds (Imams) of the line of Ismail bin Jafar Sadik. Nobody has a right to order us in this manner." Thus, Syed Ali Kiya mustered his troops in Gilan in 779/1378 and occupied Daylam, and founded the Zaidi dynasty of Amir Kiya'i Syeds, and extended his influence in Ashkawar, Kuhdum as far as Tarum and Qazwin. The lieutenant Amir Ali of Syed Amir Kiya had domineered the Ismailis in Daylam, and the local theologians also chimed in and started their customary propaganda. In 781/1379, Syed Ali Kiya chased the Ismailis in Qazwin, and retained control of that region for seven years until 788/1386, when he was compelled to surrender Qazwin, Tarum and its castle to Taymurlame (771-807/1370-1405), the founder of the Taymurid dynasty in Iran and Transoxiana.

It was at this time that the Ismailis entered in Gilgit and Hunza with the efforts of Taj Mughal. He is said to have built a Mughlai Tower at Jutial, and another on the way to Hunza, near Thol. Taj Mughal is said to have proceeded to Sikiang through Pamir, and thus he dominated most of the prominent regions of Central Asia. He died most probably in 725/1325. It seems likely that Gilgit had been ruled by the local Ismaili rulers from 710/1310 to 973/1565, and remained in close contact with the Ismailis of Badakhshan.

Imam Kassim Shah passed a *darwish* life in the mountainous regions of Azerbaijan. He was fond of hunting in the woods, and used to travel in different towns and villages, sometimes for a long time. Upon his death, most probably in 771/1370, the Imamate devolved upon his son, Islam Shah.

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ISLAM SHAH (771-827/1370-1423), 30TH IMAM

Syed Ahmad Islam Shah was also known as Islam Shah. He is also called Salam Shah and Shri Islam Shah. Imam Islam Shah assumed the Imamate in 771/1370 in Azerbaijan, ruled by Sultan Uways (757-776/1356-1374), the Jalayirid ruler. It seems that during the early 25 years of his Imamate in Azerbaijan, he visited Daylam several times in disguise.

Summing up the sparsely recorded fragments of the *ginans*, it appears that Imam Islam Shah was a man of middle height, radiant face having piercing eyes. He was a gifted man of sweet disposition and engaging manner. His mole on right cheek was an eye-catching mark. He was a generous and passed sometimes a few months in the woods on hunting excursion.

The Mongol power ended with the death of Abu Sa'id, the last Ilkhanid ruler on November 30, 1335, and some months later, Taymur was born in Samarkand on April 8, 1336. He consolidated his powers as an *amir* in Samarkand at the age of 30 years and conquered few regions of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan and India. He had a vein of cruelty in his character, and so were his soldiers. From 735/1335 when Abu Sa'id died to the year 782/1380, Iran was left to its own device in 45 years, and was divided into four to five petty rules. Taymur spurred his horses towards Iran in 783/1381 and executed several terrible expeditions. He invaded Azerbaijan in 787/1385 when Imam Islam Shah was probably in Daylam. Taymur crushed the Muzaffarid of Ispahan and cost the lives of about 70,000 of its inhabitants, whose heads were piled in pyramids.

The Ismailis had hardly set up their livings that the Taymurid danger began to loom large on the Iranian horizon. He attacked Mazandaran, Sistan and Fars in 794/1392 and conducted bloody massacres of the local Ismailis. In 795/1393, Taymur swept the thick population of the Ismailis in Amul, the principal town of Tabaristan, lying along the south coast of the Caspian Sea; and also Astrabad, the city of Jurjan province to the north frontier of Mazandaran. During his campaign in Iran in Rajab, 795/May, 1393 while going to Hamadan from Ispahan, Taymur spent few days in Anjudan inhabited by the poor Ismailis. His soldiers wildly butchered many Ismailis and pillaged their properties. According to Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi (d. 858/1454) in **Zafar-nama** (1:577), "The Ismailis of Anjudan attempted to seek protection in their underground tunnels but they mostly lost their lives when they were flooded out by the Taymur's soldiers." Taymur returned to Samarkand in 798/1396 and died in 807/1405. His empire divided into petty rules, but Turkey, Iraq and India restored their rules he devastated. Iran and Afghanistan however were dominated by the Taymurids, but their internecine strife had badly hit the Iranian economy.

In India, the Tughlaqs gained their power after Taymur's death, which ultimately had fallen to the hand of the Syeds (816-855/1414-1451) and the Lodhis (855-933/1451-1526). The Ottoman empire became powerful once again after Taymur's death and spread their influence in Islamic countries. The Mamluks of Egypt and Syria were dragged into their internal disputes. When Taymur invaded Turkey and Syria, the rule of Mamluks was confined only to Cairo. After Taymur, the Turkish ruler occupied Egypt.

After a long series of bloody expeditions in Iran, Taymur had gone to Samarkand on July 18, 1396 and Iran once again breathed peacefully. Imam Islam Shah, in the meantime, also began to trek from Azerbaijan to Kahek in Iran. Pir Hasan Kabiruddin (d. 853/1449) writes in his *ginan* that: "It was Vikram Samavat 1452, the 17th of Ashad (or July 2, 1396) when Imam Islam Shah arrived in Kahek." It is related that Imam Islam Shah had made long journey in Iran to examine the region most suitable, and finally selected Kahek and Shahr-i Babak for his residence.

The Iranian Ismailis lived peacefully in Fars, Khorasan, Kahek, Anjudan, and Rudhbar etc. Meanwhile, Muhammad Shah, the son of Momin Shah bin Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad is reported to have appeared in Daylam, but his contact with the Imam is historically shrouded in clouds. He is however said to have joined Kiya Malik, the Hazaraspid ruler for taking the possession of Ashkawar. Muhammad Shah mustered the local Ismailis and formed his force, and

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subdued Syed Mahdi Kiya with the help of Kiya Malik. Syed Mahdi Kiya was arrested and sent to Tabriz in the court of sultan Uways (757-776/1356-1374), the Jalayirid ruler of Azerbaijan, Iraq and Kurdistan. Kiya Malik reinstated his rule in Ashkawar, and granted the hold of Alamut and its locality to Muhammad Shah in 776/1374. It is known that Syed Mahdi Kiya succeeded to release from imprisonment in 778/1376 with the influence of Tajuddin Amuli, the Zaidi Syed of Timjan, who had been made the governor of Ranikuh by his brother, Syed Ali. Soon afterwards, Syed Ali took field against Ashkawar and defeated Kiya Malik, who fled to Alamut in the hope of being assisted once again by Muhammad Shah, but failed, therefore, he took refuge with Taymur. Meanwhile, the forces of Syed Ali had laid siege to Alamut while pursuing Kiya Malik, and took possession of Alamut. Muhammad Shah had been given self-conduct, and was sent to Taymur, who is reported to have sent him in Sultaniyya, where he died in 807/1404. His descendants escaped from the prison and started their living in Sultaniyya.

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In 813/1410, Syed Radi Kiya (798-829/1395-1426), the son of Syed Ali, and a powerful ruler of Lahijan, had expelled the Hazaraspid and Kushayji *amirs* from Daylam. He also stroke a severe blow to the local Ismailis during his operations, and killed a few of the descendants of Imam Alauddin Muhammad.

Kamaluddin Abdur Razzak (1413-1482), the son of Jalaluddin Ishaq Samarkandi had visited Kirman on May 21, 1441. He compiled **Matla'us Sa'dain wa Majmu'ul Bahrain** in 874/1470, but makes no mention of the Ismailis. Imam Islam Shah lived in Kahek in obscure, and did not attract the historians to make his mention. Syed Imam Shah (d. 926/1520), who had been in Kahek in the province of Kirman in 854/1450 writes in **Motto Das Avatar** (verse no. 10:141) that, "Imam Islam Shah resides in Kahek, but the ruler and people do not know him." Nuruddin bin Lutafullah (d. 834/1430) compiled **Tarikh-i Hafiz Abru** in 829/1425, however gave but a trivial account of the Ismailis during the time of Imam Islam Shah.

The Syrian Ismailis lived in peace during the period under review in Hims, Aleppo, Hammah, Masiyaf, Kadmus etc., and had generated a close contact with Imam Islam Shah through the local *da'is*. Muhammad bin Sa'd bin Daud (790-859/1378-1455), surnamed ar-Rafnah was a gifted *da'i* in Syria. He is reported to have visited Kahek few months before the death of Imam Islam Shah in 827/1423. He also attended the ascension ceremony of Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah. He was a prolific writer and wrote **Rasail al-Shifa**, refuting the claims of the Momin-shahis. He also wrote **Khams Rasail Ismailiyya**. Nuruddin Ahmad (d. 849/1445) was another *da'i* of high fame in Syria, who had travelled widely in Syria, Iraq and Arabia. His **Fusul wa-Akhbar** deals the history of the Ismailis in Syria. Abul Ma'ali Hatim bin Imran, eminently known as Ibn Zahra also flourished in the period under review, who compiled **al-Ahkam wa'l Fatarat** and **al-Mabda wa'l Ma'ad**.

The Ismailis of upper Oxus seems to have unknown about the reduction of Alamut until the time of Imam Islam Shah due to residing at farthest region. Their communication with the Iranian Ismaili Imams collapsed for over 150 years since the operations of Halagu and Taymur. Shagnan, the district of upper Oxus was the chief Ismaili centre in Central Asia, where Syed Malang Shah was followed by Syed Khamush Shah Shirazi. Sir Thomas Douglas Forsyth (1827-1886) in **Report on a Mission to Yarkand, Calcutta, 1875** puts his date at 665/1266. Syed Khamush Shah lived longer, and converted the Mongol tribes in upper Oxus. His tomb is at Kal'ai Barpanj. His descendants ruled Shagnan as hereditary Mirs during the time of Imam Islam Shah, who penetrated the Ismaili mission for the first time in China, including Yarkand and Pamir.

Imam Islam granted the title of Bawa to Syed Hashim and deputed him in Punjab as his *vakil*. He started his mission at his base in Multan, where he assumed the title of Harichandra.

With the indescribable efforts of Pir Sadruddin and Pir Hasan Kabiruddin, a large proselytism had been resulted in Sind, Punjab, Kutchh, Kathiawar and Gujrat by leaps and bounds. Syed Imam Shah admits in his **Janatpuri** (verse, 89) that, "Ismailism promulgated rapidly in India during the time of Imam Islam Shah."

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Imam Islam Shah mostly lived in Kahek, and sometimes in Shahr-i Babak. It is also said that the Ismailis in these villages had built few dens in the upper hills to seek protection during emergency. The period of Imam Islam Shah however passed in peace, and he died in 827/1423. He consigned the office of Imamate to his elder son, Muhammad.

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MUHAMMAD BIN ISLAM SHAH (827-868/1423-1463), 31ST IMAM

Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah, also known as Muhammad or Mehmud Shah, was probably born in Daylam. He was ten years old when his father arrived in Kahek in 798/1396. If this is a genuine tradition, it implies that he was born possibly in 788/1386. He mostly resided in Shahr-i Babak in Kirman. Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah seems to have started communications from his headquarters to different Ismaili communities, and also accepted the gifts of the pilgrims. It is said that the Indian Ismaili pilgrims were invested the title of *darwish* (*daras*).

The Iranian Ismailis began to revert to their former settlements in different villages. Most of them engaged in agriculture in Kohistan, Qain, Birjand, Nishapur, Khorasan, Sirjan, Jabal-i Bariz, Mahallat and Yazd.

Taymur designated his grandson Pir Muhammad as his heir, who was about 22 years old in 807/1405. But his cousin Khalil Sultan occupied Samarkand and was proclaimed as sultan. He was overthrown in 811/1409. Meanwhile, Shah Rukh (1409-1447), the fourth son of Taymur, the then governor of Herat, ascended as the next Taymurid ruler of Iran and Central Asia. He died in 851/1447 and was succeeded by his son Olugh Beg (1447-1449), who was in turn followed by Abu Sa'id (1451-1469).

One important point should not be omitted here that the office of the *hujjat* or *pir* in India from Pir Shams (d. 757/1356) to Pir Hasan Kabiruddin (d. 853/1449) was almost hereditary, and the office began to be revered like the hereditary office of the Imams, and therefore, an effect was necessary to enforce in the line of the pirs before the time it might become an ingrained tradition. Thus, after the death of Pir Hasan Kabiruddin, Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah designated his brother Pir Tajuddin, as a next Pir for Hind and Sind instead of any son.

It appears that there are certain indications of the meeting between Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah and Shah Nimatullah (d. 834/1431), the chief of the Nimatullahis in Kirman. We have however no trace to confirm their meeting.

Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah died in Kahek in 868/1463, and was succeeded by his elder son, Mustansir billah II.

MUSTANSIR BILLAH II (868-880/1463-1475), 32ND IMAM

Ali Shah, surnamed Mustansir billah, also known as Jalaluddin was born in Kahek. He seems to have known as Shah Qalandar among the Iranian mystics. He too resided in Kahek and sometimes in Shahr-i Babak. In **Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi**, we also find different terms for the Imam that became vogue among his followers, such as *Imam-i Zaman* (Imam of the time), *Imam-i Hazar* (the apparent Imam), *Sahibu'z Zaman* (the master of the world), *Ali Zaman* (the Ali of the time), *Sahibu'l Amr* (the master of authority), *Hazar Jama* (the present bearer of light), and simply *Hazrat-i Mawlana Mustansir billah*.

The Syeds in the line of Syed Imam Shah (1430-1520) were known as Pirana Syeds and the Syeds of the mainstream of the community in the descent of Syed Rehmatullah Shah were called Kadiwal Syeds. There are different versions for the appellation of the word Kadiwal. It is related

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that Syed Rehmatullah Shah, the son of Pir Hasan Kabir and his family members shortly lived in the village, named Kadhi, between Uchh and Multan, and then he had gone to live in a village, Kadi in the northern Gujrat on the route to Junagadh. Thus, his descendants became known as Kadhiwala, or Kadiwala.

The Kadiwal Syeds operated the mission in India for about 250 years. Some of them had retained their contact with the Imams in Iran, but some discontinued, and conducted the mission independently. Syed Rehmatullah Shah mostly preached in Gujrat and Kutchh. Syed Nurbaksh (1446-1504), the grandson of Pir Hasan Kabiruddin, also known as Syed Mitha Shah in Punjab, is said to have preached in Jammu and Kashmir. He was assisted by his son Mir Shamsuddin II. Syed Nurbaksh also visited Badakhshan, Kohistan, Tibet, Gilgit, Yarkand and Iskardu. His son was also active in Kashmir, and his followers became known as Shamsi, who migrated towards Punjab during 14th century. They preached Ismailism in the Sufic mantle and their Sufic *tariqah* became known as Nurbakhshia, also existed in Kohistan.

It appears fragmentarily that Imam Mustansir billah had taken serious notice of the impairing economy of the Ismailis of Iran, Syria, India, Badakhshan and other parts of Central Asia. He emphasized his followers to assist one another, and thus he said: "The real believer is one who assists and helps his brother in religion, who shares with him his food, his sorrow and joy, never admitting into his heart any malice or enmity, being one with him in word and deed. If one satisfies his hunger, the other's hunger must also be satisfied. If one remains hungry, the other should remain hungry too. If one eats something, the other should also partake of everything that his friend has eaten." (**Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi**, p. 56)

Badiuddin Khwaja Kassim was an eminent *hujjat* in Anjudan, who served as the chief of the Ismaili mission between the period of Imam Mustansir billah and Imam Gharib Mirza.

Syed Hashim launched his mission in Multan, India in the period of Imam Islam Shah and Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah. His son Bawa Gul Muhammad, known as Bawa Gulgul was a trader and had extended his mercantile activities in Iran. He visited Shahr-i Babak to see Imam Mustansir billah. The Imam appointed him his *vakil* for Punjab. His son Mahr al-Din, known as Bawa Mohyi continued the mission in Punjab, then in Sind where he lived mostly in the village of Phul'nai.

Imam Mustansir billah was a good horseman and hunter and stayed in Anjudan as his summer villa, where a small number of his followers inhabited. He died in Kahek in 880/1475, but was buried in Anjudan, most probably in pursuant of his will. Later on, a mausoleum was erected in Anjudan. The mausoleum of Imam Mustansir billah II is the oldest surviving Nizari Ismaili monument in Anjudan; which is an imposing octagonal building with a dome, appearing conical from outside. In the middle of the chamber, there is a wooden-coffer, exquisitely carved. On its top is written:- "The pure, sacred and luminous grave of Shah Mustansir billah. By the order and care of Abdus Salam." A broad panel at the top edge on all sides is beautifully carved with the text of Sura Yasin of the Koran. At the bottom, there is written:- "Wrote this the humble slave Abdul Jalil in 885/1480". This tends to the conclusion that the wooden box was erected by the order of Imam Abdus Salam, the son and successor of Imam Mustansir billah, most probably five years after latter's death.

ABDUS SALAM (880-899/1475-1493), 33RD IMAM

Mahmud Shah, surnamed Abdus Salam or Salam Shah, whose exact date of birth is not known. But the evidence is in favour of his having been born in 859/1456 in Shahr-i Babak, where he mostly passed his early life. He is also called Shah Salamullah. He ascended to the office of Imamate at the age of 21 years. It is related that he was a pragmatic scholar and had gleaned historical informations from his father and the elders of the community, notably the period stretching from the reduction of Alamut to his time.

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It seems that Imam Mustansir billah II and his successor, Imam Abdus Salam had strictly advised the Ismailis in Iran, Central Asia and India not to refer or divulge the name of the Imam of the time in presence of the ignorant and adopt *taqiya*. For instance, it is mentioned in **Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi** (p. 56) that: "O, truly-faithful believers, Mawlana Shah Mustansir bi'l-lah says: do not mention myself and the name of your Imam, Shah Abdu's-Salam Shah, in the presence of the ignorant and unbelieving people who have an innate hatred of the Prophetship and Imamate. You must, however, appeal to him in your heart and with your tongues. Conceal my whereabouts (*sirr'i ma'ra*) from the irreligious people of today (*ghayr din'i zamana*), so that you may for this attain the perfect reward and a righteous life. God the Bountiful will be pleased by you, the people of sincere faith, and your hearts will be enlightened, shinning, and full of joy."

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The Ismailis used to visit Kahek, where they were hosted and such facility was also created in Shahr-i Babak. It is said that the Indian Ismailis were granted the titles of Varas and Rai. Some Sufi sounding *khanaqahs* (cloisters) had been also built in Shahr-i Babak. The Indian and Syrian pilgrims were lodged in different taverns, where they were looked after by some Ismaili guards, who also escorted them during their departure. Some escorts also joined the pilgrims to track them over the safe route.

In Iran, the descendants of Taymur have founded their own petty rules. The Ottoman empire in Turkey became powerful, and sultan Suleman, the Magnificent had captured Istanbul in 1453, making a door open into Europe. The Mamluk kingdom in Egypt was impaired due to internal wars.

It has been heretofore referred that the tradition of the *pir* for the Indian community had been suspended in the time of Imam Mustansir billah after the death of Pir Tajuddin in 873/1467. The Indian tradition relates that a certain Nizamuddin Kapur, known as Kamadia Kapur or Kapura Lohana, whose tomb is near the Bhambari village, about eleven miles from Tando Muhammad Khan; had visited Iran with an Indian deputation, and humbly urged Imam Abdus Salam to send next *hujjat*, or *pir* in India. He insisted that the whole Indian community should not be punished for the misconduct of one *jamat* of Sind. The Imam is reported to have said: "I cannot revoke the decision of my father." Kamadia Kapur and his team lodged in Shahr-i Babak for some months and craved devotionally to win the heart of the Imam. One day, Imam summoned him at his residence and said: "My father has suspended the tradition of *pir* for India, which will not be revoked in my period. I, however, appoint a *samit* (silent) *pir* instead." The Imam thus gave him a book, namely **Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi** with an instruction to obey its advices as if a *natiq* (speaking) *pir*. The tradition further relates that the Imam had taken a word from Kamadia Kapur that the name of the *jamat*, who misbehaved with Pir Tajuddin in Sind, would not be divulged in other Ismaili *jamat*s, so as to retain the unity of the Indian communities.

Imam Abdus Salam also wrote **Panj Sukhan-i Hazarat-i Shah Abdus Salam**, the instructive advices for the believers in 30 pages. It is another small collection of the advices followed most probably by the compilation of **Pandiyat-i Jawanmardi,** otherwise it would have been most possibly incorporated in it.

It is known that a group of Momin-Shahis adhered Raziuddin, the father of Shah Tahir Hussain Dakkani (d. 956/1549) as their Imam in Badakhshan. Imam Abdus Salam sent his three *farmans*, instructing the erring group to revert to the fold of the legitimate line. These *farmans* are found in a **Maj'mua** in Kirman, bearing the signature of the Imam with a date of 895/1490.

Syed Suhrab Wali Badakhshani flourished in this period. He was hailed from Herat and passed his life in Badakhshan and Kabul as a local missionary. In his writing, he writes the date 856/1452 which suggests that he lived in the time of Imam Muhammad bin Islam Shah (d. 868/1463), Imam Mustansir billah (d. 880/1475) and Imam Abdus Salam (d. 899/1493). It appears from his **Nur-nama** that he was most possibly influenced with the teachings of the *da'is* of Pir Shams in Badakhshan to some extent. He however, continued to preach the teachings of Nasir Khusaro. He was followed by Syed Umar Yamghani, whose descendants and followers

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continued Ismaili mission around Badakhshan, and operated as far as Hunza, Gilgit, Chitral and Ghazar.

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After Taymur's death, for some time neither his son Shah Rukh in the east, nor the Ottomans in the west were able to extend their influences in western Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Mesopotamia. Here the Turkomans were the strongest tribe until the rise of the Safavids in 905/1500. These Turkomans had founded their dynasties, known as Kara-Koyunlu (780-874/1378-1469) and Ak-Koyunlu (780-908/1378-1502). The death of Uzun Hasan (872-883/1467-1478), the founder of Ak-Koyunlu dynasty in Azerbaijan had gladdened the wandering Turkomans, and they imagined that Azerbaijan, Iran and Fars were their ancestral kingdom. Aba Bakr Beg Begtash, the son of sultan Abu Sa'id commanded the Turkomans and Chaghatays with a hope to find a new kingdom. So by way of Sistan and Bam, they marched on Kirman in 883/1478. Fazalullah bin Ruzbihan Khunji (925/1520) compiled his **Tarikh-i Alam-Ara'yi Amini** in 896/1490 (abridged translation made by V. Minorsky, entitled **Persia in A.D. 1478-1490**, London, 1957, p. 43) that, "The *amir-zada* Ali Jahan (son of Jahangir) was a respected ruler of Kirman and Sirjan, but he was frightened by this multitude (of the Turkomans and Chaghatays) and, without fighting and in utter terror, retreated to Shahr-i Babak. So the whole of Kirman and Sirjan fell into the hands of the Chaghatays and Turkomans. Under the guise of *na'l-baha* (an arbitrary levy imposed as a compensation for the horse-shoes which have become worn out) and homage, they looted rich and poor."

On hearing this, Abul Muzaffar Yaqub Khan (883-896/1478-1490), the son of Uzun Hasan sent against the aggressors a numerous army under the command of Sufi Khalil Beg. They were reinforced by Baysunqur Beg. The Chaghatays and Turkomans sent their families and baggages into the stronghold of Sirjan, while they themselves took their stand in Kirman, determining to put up a strong fight. The forces of Sufi Khalil Beg first went to the stronghold of Sirjan and captured it in the first inroad, and their enemies fled to Jurjan and Tabaristan. Having razed to the ground the strongholds of Sirjan and Kirman, the Ak-Koyunlu commander returned to Azerbaijan.

We do not have any detail of the Imam and the Ismailis in the contemporary sources, but it ensues from sparsely traditions that Imam Abdus Salam had most possibly evacuated Shahr-i Babak in early period of 883/1478 with the Ismailis before the roaring march of the Chaghatays and Turkomans, and after their suppression, he returned to Shahr-i Babak.

Imam Abdus Salam died in 899/1493 in Shahr-i Babak, and with his death the Imamate devolved upon his son, Gharib Mirza.

GHARIB MIRZA (899-902/1493-1496), 34TH IMAM

Abbas Shah, surnamed Shah Gharib or Gharib Mirza, was also known as Gharibu'l-lah and Mustansir billah III, and assumed the Imamate in 899/1493. Imam Gharib Mirza seems to have left Shahr-i Babak few months after assuming Imamate. He seems to have repaired for about one year out of Shahr-i Babak, leaving behind his *hujjat*, called Badiuddin Khwaja Kassim, and at length settled down in Anjudan, most possibly in 900/1494. Pir Shihabuddin Shah (d. 1884) also writes in his **Khitabat-i Aliyya** (pp. 42-43) that, "The thirty-fourth Imam Abbas Shah (Gharib Mirza) was obliged to live for some time away from his ancestral home (*watn-i maluf*), i.e., Shahr-i Babak." The reason of his absence was that the rambling bands of Chaghatays and Turkomans had once again gushed from Jurjan and Tabaristan after being suppressed in 883/1478 by the Ak-Koynunlu commander, Sufi Khalil Beg. They plundered the surrounding localities of Kirman and Sirjan.

Anjudan is situated at the foot of relatively low rocky range, about 37 kilometers east of Arak and about the same distance westward from Mahallat in central Iran. It is separated 35-40 kilometers

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with Kahek by a number of shallow ranges, and is also close to Qumm and Kashan. The Ismailis had begun their settlements slowly in Anjudan most probably during the time of Imam Mustansir billah II, and had taken there agriculture. It was the cradle land of the Ismaili mission in post-Alamut era. It was simply walled to protect the populace in times of insecurity. It appears that the *dawa* system after the fall of Alamut was organized systematically in Anjudan period.

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Imam Gharib Mirza shifted to Anjudan and kept himself completely out of the vortex of politics, and passed a life of *darwish*, where he became known as Gharib Mirza i.e., "an unknown stranger." Earlier, he was generally known as Abbas Shah. He also applied the name Gharib Mirza in his writing in Anjudan. His eloquent power was impressive and sweet, and was highly respected among the local non-Ismaili orbits. He was a man of affable temperament and wide human sympathies, which made him a popular figure in the locality.

The Safavid family was active in making ground to emerge as a new power in Iran, tracing descent from Musa Kazim. The prominent head at that time was Shaikh Safi (1252-1334), who founded a Sufi order, known after him as the Safaviya at Ardabil. He died in 735/1334 and his order was continued by his son, Sadruddin Musa (1334-1391), and then by another son, Khwaja Ali (1391-1427). They deeply influenced most of the Mongol rulers and *amirs*. Ibrahim (1427-1447), the son of Khwaja Ali also continued the Sufi order founded by Shaikh Safi, but Junayd (1447-1460), the son of Ibrahim acquired some political power and introduced the doctrines of the Twelvers at the time of his death in 1460. He fought several times with the rulers of Kara-Koyunlu, but was killed at Shirwan. His followers continued to gain religious and political leads in Iran. Junayd's son married to Martha, a Greek princess, who bore Sultan Ali, Ibrahim and Ismail. His another son, Hyder (1460-1478) was killed, and other sons were arrested. Thus, only Ismail was survived, because Sultan Ali was also killed and Ibrahim had died very soon. Hence, the events continued to boost the rising of the Safavids during the time of Ismail. Gilan was the centre of the Safavid family. Ismail collected a small force and occupied Baku and Shamakha. He defeated Alwand, the prince of Ak-Kuyunlu dynasty, and captured Tabriz. He also inflicted defeat to the Mongolian ruler and was proclaimed as Shah Ismail and founded the Safavid dynasty in 905/1500 in Iran.

Nuruddin Shah, the younger brother of Imam Gharib Mirza is said to have built a small village near Anjudan after his name, called Nurabad. He also built a defensive post and few small buildings. He erected a Sufi *khanaqah* (cloister) of Abbas Shahi tradition for the local Sufis.

The Ismailis had continued their flocking at Anjudan, where Imam Gharib Mirza confessed their offerings and blessed them with written guidances, bearing his signature and seal. It has since become a tradition in India to celebrate the day of rejoice with great pomp by commonalty and gentry alike when the pilgrims returned unscathed to their homeland.

Abu Ishaq Kohistani was a learned *da'i* around this period. His name was Ibrahim, was from the district of Mominabad-i Kohistan in the province of Birjand. Nothing is known about his activities. He was however a writer, and it appears from his writings that he had studied the accessible literature of Alamut period. His famous work, **Haft Bab-i Bu Ishaq** deals the recognition of the Imam with philosophical arguments on Ismaili *tariqah*. His another work, **Tarikh-i Kohistan** is not traceable.

Bawa Khair al-Din, known as Khair or Khaitaji, the son of Bawa Ghul Muhammad bin Syed Hashim visited Anjudan with a deputation. During conversation, the Imam asked, "Who is the greatest?" Nobody returned satisfactory answer. At last, Bawa Khair al-Din said, "The *amr* (authority) is the greatest." Imam was pleased with his answer and appointed him his *vakil* for India.

It is related that Imam Gharib Mirza mastered the botanical field, and with his knowledge, the village of Anjudan was turned into a fertile tract. He mostly passed his whole life in Anjudan, and died in 902/1496. In Anjudan, near the mausoleum of Imam Mustansir billah II, there exists an old burial ground in the garden, the middle of which stands the mausoleum of Imam Gharib Mirza. The wooden box (*sanduq*) contains Sura Yasin of the Koran. In one place, it is clearly

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written:- "This is the wooden box (*sanduq*) of Shah Mustansir billah (i.e., Gharib Mirza), the son of Shah Abdus Salam. Written on the 10th of Moharram, 904/August 29, 1498." From this one can conclude that this wooden box was erected about two years after the death of the Imam.

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ABUZAR ALI (902-915/1496-1509), 35TH IMAM

Muhammad Abuzar Shah, surnamed Abuzar, was also called Nuruddin. He is also known as Shah Nuruddin bin Gharib Shah in the Syrian works. Like his father, he also passed a *darwish* life in Anjudan. He had however advised his followers to exercise precautions in view of new religious tendency and political cataclysm in Iran.

The village of Anjudan considerably accelerated on account of ample water supply, therefore, the new protective walls with fortifications were built around it during the early time of Imam Abuzar Ali's Imamate. It caused the old enclosure itself to play the part of a sort of citadel. Some craftsmen, blacksmiths, potters tanners and dyers had come from outside, and possibly built their workshops on the outskirts.

In 904/1499, Shah Ismail had decided that the time was ripe for the supreme bid for power. He prepared a colossal army, and began to conquer the Iranian territories in 905/1500 including Iraq and founded the Safavid empire. In Iran, he absolutely dominated in Hamdan, Mazandaran, Shirwan, Khorasan, and Yazd etc. He tried to extend his influence in Afghanistan, Balkh and Bukhara. The Ottoman empire evidently opposed the growing power in Iran. The Uzbek rulers of Bukhara however checked the advance of the Safavids. Thus, the Safavids considered their two borders insecure for the empire.

Shah Ismail's fist action on his accession was the proclamation of the Shi'ism as the state religion of Iran, differentiating from the Ottoman of Turkey, who were the Sunnis. Shah Ismail however failed to impose Shi'ism in many Iranian regions. Many people are reported to have been executed, and other migrated. The Sunni theologians went to Herat, India and Bukhara. Under such rigorous policy, one renowned Ismaili scholar, Shah Tahir Hussain Dakkani also fled from Kashan, and repaired to India. The Sufis were also not spared in Iran, who began to live under the cloak of the Twelvers.

The strict Shi'ite tendency in Iran had certainly forced the Ismailis to assume the mantle of the Twelvers to get rid of the executions. Weathering these storms, it seems that Imam Abuzar Ali had gone into hiding for about seven years between 905/1500 and 912/1507, which can be ascertained also from the version of Khayr Khwah Herati's **Tasnifat** (ed. W. Ivanow, Tehran, 1961, p. 52). Before leaving Anjudan for an unknown place, he had most possibly left behind his *hujjat* to act as a link between the Imam and the followers.

Momin Shah, the son of Imam Shamsuddin Muhammad was the *hujjat* in Syria. Since he was an elder son, therefore, a small section in Syria had considered him as his father's successor. He returned from Syria and settled down in a village called Khwand in Qazwin, bordering Gilan too. He preached the esoteric teachings of Ismailism on Sufic pattern. Momin Shah built a small *khanaqah* (cloister) in Khwand, where he and his descendants were revered as the "Saints of Khwand" (*sadat-i khwandia*) due to their piety and learning. Momin Shah died in 738/1337 and remained faithful to the line of Kassim-Shahi. None among them had ever claimed for Imamate, or visited Syria to nourish that small growing group, who later on became known as Momin-Shahis. The trivial section of Momin-Shahis was neither a forgotten branch of the Ismailis, nor a schism of great importance.

Muhammad Shah (d. 807/1404), the son of Momin Shah became the next saint (*sadat*) of their *khanaqah* in Khwand, who also acquired few powers in the locality of Daylam. He was succeeded by his son, Raziuddin I (d. 833/1429), who in turn was succeeded by his son Muhammad Tahir

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Shah (d. 867/1462). His son Raziuddin II (d. 915/1509) had gone to Badakhshan from Sistan in 913/1508 for mission. He established his rule over a large part of Badakhshan with the help of the Ismailis during the time of a certain Taymurid *amir* called Mirza Khan (d. 926/1520). Raziuddin II was killed in the local tribal fighting in 915/1509. Mirza Khan then executed many Ismailis in Badakhshan.

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Imam Abuzar Ali is said to have returned to Anjudan in 912/1507 after getting congenial atmosphere. He maintained his cordial ties with the local *amirs*, elites and the Safavids. Imam Abuzar Ali is said to have betrothed to Sabira Khatoon, the daughter of Shah Ismail, and was granted the title of *Amir al-Umra* (chief of the chiefs). This matrimonial relationship suggests a close tie of the Imam with the ruling power in the mantle of the Twelver.

Imam Abuzar Ali died in 915/1509 and was buried in Anjudan. The Russain scholar W. Ivanow had visited Anjudan in 1937 to collect the details from the inscriptions of then existing graves and mausoleums of the Ismaili Imams. He failed to locate the grave of Imam Abuzar Ali in Anjudan. But, before him, Muhammad Taqi bin Ali Reza, who compiled **Athar-i Muhammadi** in 1893 had visited Anjudan before the migration of Imam Aga Hasan Ali Shah in 1842. He had discovered the grave of Imam Abuzar Ali, and writes, "Imam Abuzar Ali had been invested the honorific title of *Amir al-Umra*, whose description is still preserved on the marble slab of Imam's grave" (pp. 65-66). It tenaciously corroborates to the fact that the grave of the Imam in Anjudan had been decayed before the visit of W. Ivanow, and it is, of course, possible that the same would have been happened with the grave of Imam Murad Mirza.

MURAD MIRZA (915-920/1509-1514), 36TH IMAM

Ali Shah, surnamed Shah Murad or Murad Mirza lived in Anjudan. He had also retained his close relations with Shah Ismail cemented by his father. His mode of living, his dress and food were characterized by a rare simplicity.

The Ottoman sultan Salim (1512-1520) began his long march to northern Azerbaijan after putting 40,000 Shi'as to death in his dominions. He reached the plain of Chaldiran and the outbreak of war occurred in 920/1514. He inflicted a defeat to Shah Ismail. The Ottoman firepower, consisting of 200 cannon and 100 mortars was brought into play with devastating effect. After suffering heavy casualties, the Safavid artilleries were forced to break off the engagement. When Shah Ismail left the battlefield, sultan Salim did not pursue him. Later, he marched to Tabriz, the Safavid capital, which he occupied in 922/1517. Caterino Zeno, the Venetian ambassador writes in **Travels in Persia** (p. 61) that, "If the Turk had been beaten in the battle of Chaldiran, the power of Ismail would have become greater than that of Tamerlane, as by the fame alone of such a victory he would have made himself absolute lord of the East." Later, the Mamluks of Syria and Egypt similarly remained wedded to their cavalry, and were also defeated by the Ottomans.

The effect of the Safavid defeat at Chaldiran was the loss of the province of Diyar Bakr, which was annexed to the Ottoman empire in 921/1516. Shah Ismail went into mourning after his defeat. During the remaining ten years of his reign, he never once led his troops into action in person. He did not devote his attention to the affairs of the state as in the past. On the contrary, he seems to have tried to drown his sorrows by wine. His abdication of his responsibilities in regard to the personal direction of the affairs of state gave certain officials the opportunity to increase their own power. The clash between the Kizilbash and the Iranian soldiers began to be a threat to the Safavid kingdom.

Kizilbash were the Turkomans, who were distinguished for wearing red pointed caps, which they had begun to wear in the time of Shaikh Hyder (1456-1488), the father of Shah Ismail; and thus they became known as *Kizil-Bash* (red heads), and in its Iranian form, *Qizilbash*, or Red Heads. They shaved their beards but let their moustaches grow. The Kizilbash constituted the backbone

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of the Safavid army. It seems probable on that juncture that Shah Ismail had generated a close tie with the Ismaili Imams in Anjudan, and granted them the title of *Amir al-Umra*. There is one another reason that the Ismailis had joined the Safavid army in Khorasan, who had repulsed the aggressive advance of the Uzbeks in 916/1510. Shah Ismail had most possibly planned to seek the martial aids from the Khorasani Ismaili warriors to crush the uprising in his military if required. He therefore, maintained cordial relation with the Imams of Anjudan. Shah Ismail however died in 930/1524.

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It is said that the Muharram was an ideal month for the Ismaili pilgrims visiting Anjudan. They carried usually a small dummy *taziya* (replica of Imam Hussain's tomb), and placed it in front of the caravan and passed through the teeth of the bitterest and aggressive places in the Shi'ite garbs. They put the *taziya* at the entrance of Anjudan, and took it again while leaving the town.

Imam Murad Mirza appointed Bawa Yasir, known as Bawa Sir as a *vakil* for India. He came in Sind and deputed his sons Alauddin or A'as al-Din and Jamar al-Din in Punjab to make survey for his mission. When he visited Iran with religious dues by way of Baluchistan, his servant secretly informed the local people, who plundered and killed him. Later, the people repented and built his shrine in the village of Kechh, near Makran. Bawa Yasir left behind three sons, Jamr al-Din, Alauddin or A'as al-Din and Daud.

Imam Murad Mirza died in 920/1514 in Anjudan and was succeeded by his son Zulfikar Ali.

It is worth mentioning that the **Tarikh-i Alfi** (the Millennial History) was compiled in India by several authors at the request of Mughal emperor Akbar in 1000/1592, whose one part was chronicled by Jafar Beg Asif Khan (d. 1021/1612), describing a rebellion hatched by a certain Murad in 982/1575 and the domineering of the Ismailis in Anjudan by Shah Tahmasp (d. 984/1576). More detail of the same episode is described under the year 981/1574 by the Safavid historian, Qadi Mir Ahmad Munshi al-Qummi (d. after 1015/1606) in his **Khulasat al-Tawarikh** (1:582-4). Both sources relate that a certain Murad had numerous followers also in India, sending him large sums of money from Sind and Makran. Murad was engaged in political turmoil outside Anjudan, having acquired supporters in Kashan and elsewhere in Central Iran. Being alarmed by his activity, early in 981/1574, Shah Tahmasp ordered the Kizilbash governor of Hamadan, Amir Khan Mawsil'lu, to take field against Anjudan and arrest Murad. Amir Khan executed a bulk of the Ismailis in Anjudan and its locality and took much booty from them, but Murad, who was stayed at a fortress in the district of Kamara near Anjudan, managed to escape. Soon afterwards, Murad had been arrested and imprisoned near the royal quarters. In Jamada II, 981/October, 1573, Murad escaped from prison with the help of Muhammad Muqim, a high Safavid official who had come under Murad's influence. Murad fled to the vicinity of Kandhar, getting help on the way from his followers in Fars, Makran and Sind. A few months later, he was arrested in Afghanistan by the Safavid guards. He was brought before Shah Tahmasp, who had him executed along with Muhammad Muqim.

Farhad Daftary identifies above certain Murad with Imam Murad Mirza (d. 920/1514). The most important aspect of the story, which deserves serious treatment is the stark difference between these two persons for about 60 years. Secondly, it is neither warranted in the Ismaili traditions, nor there is a single example, connoting the Imams to have involved in the political arena while living in Anjudan, and therefore, the alleged rebellion of the Imam Murad Mirza is highly doubtful. Thirdly, it would be absurd to believe that Imam Murad Mirza had vainly stirred up a revolt with handful supporters and fled, putting behind his followers into the millstone of cruelty in Anjudan. Fourthly, the remittance of religious dues to the Imams by the Indian followers was a practice in vogue, which can be incorporated to suit the notion of any anecdote for the Ismailis. Fifthly, the above story places the rebellion in 982/1575, which is veritably the period of Imam Khalilullah Ali (957-993/1550-1585), the last Imam of Anjudan era. We would, however, venture the opinion that the whole story embodies elegance and rhetoric rather than a factual picture, and that Mirza in the story was in reality the leader of the Nuqtawiya sect in the time of Imam Khalilullah. He mustered handful supporters for engineering a ground of rebellion against the Safavids. The followers of the Nuqtawiya were inhabited in the vicinity of Anjudan, and their

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uprising under their leader, Murad cannot be attributed to the Ismailis. It seems unlikely that Imam Murad Mirza was that of a rebellious Murad.

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It must be added that several extremist movements with Shi'ite tendencies sprouted in Iran. For instance, the Hurufi movement was founded by a certain Fazalullah Astrabadi (740-796/1340-1394) in about 780/1378. His followers became known as Hurufis due to emphasizing the hidden meaning of the letters (*huruf*). Anatolia was the main foothold of the Hurufism. Later, the Hurufism vanished in Iran, and several petty groups split off from it, notably the Nuqtawiya. It was founded by Mahmud (d. 831/1428) around 800/1398, who was the disciple of Fazalullah Astrabadi in Gilan. Mahmud taught to his followers the significance of the point (*nuqta*) as the building brick of his symbolical system. Thus, his group became known as the Nuqtawiya (pointism) and his followers as the People of the Point (*ahl-i-nuqta*). The Nuqtawiya gradually found their foothold in the Caspian region and the villages of Qazwin, Kashan, Ispahan and Shiraz. Mahmud died in 831/1428 on the border of Azerbaijan and Arran. His followers however continued his mission in Iran and India.

Our sources as cited above also relate a revolt under the year 983/1576 by the followers of Mahmud against the Safavids in the village surrounding the city of Kashan. This major revolt occurred in conjunction with an uprising in Anjudan led by the Nuqtawiya leader, called Murad. **Tarikh-i Alfi** admits specifically that the revolt stirred in Anjudan by Murad was that of the Nuqtawiya order.

We also find a vogue tendency in the Iranian sources to conflate the Hurufis and Nuqtawiya wrongly with the Ismailis. The instance of an Ismaili poet, Kassim Amiri is ample in this context, who was lynched in 999/1591. He is considered erroneously as the follower of the Nuqtawism in the Iranian sources. Ahmad bin Nasrullah Qadizada Tatawi, whose father had taken part in suppressing the Kashan revolt, was vague about the connection between the two revolts, suggesting explicitly that the followers of Mahmud were collaborating with the Ismailis of Anjudan, vide **Nuqtawiyan ya Pisikhaniyan** (Tehran, 1941, p. 36) by Sadik Kiya. The balance of argument tends to show in concluding this critique that Imam Murad Mirza had nothing to do with the above rebellion of the Nuqtawiya.

ZULFIKAR ALI (920-922/1514-1516), 37TH IMAM

Zulfikar Ali, known as Khalil or Khalilullah, was born most probably in 900/1394, and resided in Anjudan. Syed Imam Shah (d. 926/1520) described the name Shah Khalil most possibly for Imam Zulfikar Ali.

Imam Zulfikar Ali used to visit different villages to see his followers, and sometimes stayed with them for few months. It is related that when he had been in the village of Dizbad in Khorasan, the parents of Khaki Khorasan, a renowned Ismaili poet and philosopher, used to go late in the night to see the Imam, after ensuring that their child was sleeping well. The daily absence of the parents aroused the curiosity of Khaki Khorasani, who was then hardly seven years old. On one night, he followed his parents without their knowledge, upto the secret place. He did not enter the house and hid behind the door. He however could watch inside the house his parents and other Ismaili elders. He could not understand the religious ceremonies being solemnized, but his heart palpitated with inner joy, because he just saw the Imam sitting before the congregation. At the end of service, the food offerings brought by the faithful were shared. Imam Zulfikar Ali told to a person to share it to each one. When he finished, he was asked to see outside. The person stepped out the house, and found a tired child watching the proceedings. He also got his share, and since then Khaki Khorasani cultivated a love and devotion towards his Imam.

It seems that the Imam was also in close contact with the Syrian Ismailis, and sent his letters from time to time. One like letter is discovered in Syria, which had been sent through a *da'i*

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Shamsuddin bin Daulatshah. It was read in the Syrian community in presence of the local Ismaili Qadi Shihabuddin bin Ibrahim al-Mainaqi (872-937/1467-1532). This letter reads:-

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My spiritual children,

Thanks be to God Who had dignified whom He wanted by His obedience, and reviled whom He wanted due to His disobedience. And prayer be on His Prophet who made all His nations equal, and called them for His obedience and worship.

You must know that the knowledge of the Imam is one of the principles which should be accepted. As the Imam is permanent and an ever existing truth, the world could not be vacant of him for a single hour. And he, who does not know the Imam of his time, he would die a pre-Islamic death.

The Imams are ever existing and permanent. They are continuous dynasty coming out the one from the other. The Imam is known from his original nucleus. If he has nominated and appointed for the post of Imamate, any one of his sons, he should be considered the right Imam.

There are a few other Syrian Ismailis of high repute in the period under review, whose biographies are however not accessible, such as Muhammad bin al-Jazirah, Abu Mansur al-Yameni al-Shadili, who wrote **Kitab al-Bayan**; Muhammad Abul Makrim, Muhammad bin al-Fazal bin Ali al-Baza'i etc.

Abu Firas is one of the most eminent figures in Syria. His name was Abu Firas Shihabuddin bin al-Qadi Nasr bin al-Jawshan bin al-Hussain al-Daylami al-Maynaqi. His father was a native of Daylam, who migrated to Syria in 859/1455, and settled down in the fortress of Maynaqa. Abu Firas was born at Maynaqa in 872/1468. He acquired his education in Aleppo and served the Syrian community to great extent. He became a chief *da'i* of Syria, and died in 947/1540 at Maynaqa. He was a prolific writer, and his **Qasidat al-Nasab** deals the lineage of the Imams. He had a son, called Ibrahim Abu Firas, who died during his lifetime.

Khayr Khwah Herati most probably lived in this period. His name was Muhammad Reza bin Sultan Hussain Ghuriyan Herati. His pen-name was however Gharibi. He was born in Herat at the end of 15th century. His father Sultan Hussain was a native of Ghuriyan in Afghanistan, where he served as an Imam's *vakil*. Being summoned by the Imam through a messenger Mir Mahmud, he started his journey along with Khwaja Kassim Kohistani, but was killed by brigands in Khorasan. His son Khayr Khwah, who was then 19 years old had been taken in his father's place despite the objection of some community elders, because of his young age. Khayr Khwah visited Anjudan and saw the Imam. He describes in his **Risala**, how the different *hujjats* arrived during the fortnight he spent in Anjudan. He had been given due training of Ismaili mission, and was sent to Mashhad for learning Arabic. Finally, he was made the chief *da'i* in place of his father in Afghanistan. He was a man of great ability and a potential *da'i*. He died most probably after 960/1553.

It appears from the fragments of different traditions that few Ismaili *fidais* had been commissioned risky task, whose complete details are not accessible. It is however learnt that during the operations, many of them did not return to Anjudan and had lost their lives. Examples of such unknown *fidais* are found in the time of Imam Murad Mirza, who had taken whole responsibilities of the family members of these *fidais*. We have a report that Imam Zulfikar Ali had provided sustenance to about twelve families, whose young men had been deputed on an unknown mission, some of them returned or died.

Imam Zulfikar Ali died in 922/1516, and was succeeded by his son Nuruddin Ali.

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NURUDDIN ALI (922-957/1516-1550), 38TH IMAM

His name was Nur-Dahr (the light of the faith), and was also known as Nur-Dahr Khalilullah. His name however in the official list of the Imams appears as Nuruddin Ali. According to another tradition, he was also called Nizar Ali Shah. He mostly resided in Anjudan, and betrothed to a Safavid lady.

Shah Ismail, the founder of the Safavids died in 930/1524, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Tahmasp, who was ten years and three months old. The Kizilbash took over control of the state and usurped the authority of the new king for a decade. In 940/1533, Shah Tahmasp executed Hussain Khan Shamlu, the most powerful Kizilbash leader, and took over the power. The civil war in Iran had critically paralyzed the state and given an unexpected opportunity to the two most formidable enemies of the Safavid state, the Ottoman Turks in the west and the Uzbeks in the east, to strike deep into Safavid territory. Between 1524 and 1538, the Uzbeks, led by the vigorous Obaidullah Khan, launched five major invasions on Khorasan. Even more dangerous were the four full-scale invasions of Iran between 1533 and 1553 by the Ottomans, then at the height of their power under the great sultan Suleman (900-974/1494-1566), known as The Lawgiver, and to the West as The Magnificent. The remarkable thing is not that the Safavids suffered serious losses of territory as a result of these onslaughts, but that they were not overwhelmed. Shah Tahmasp, struggling against discord and disloyalty and treachery in high places, both on the part of Kizilbash chiefs and on the part of his own brothers, managed to hold the Safavid state together for more than half a century.

The Ottoman sultan Suleman launched his incursion in Azerbaijan in 940/1533 against the Safavids. At this critical juncture, a heavy snowfall blanketed the plain of Sultaniyya, where the Ottomans were encamped, and many Turkish soldiers perished from exposure. Sultan Suleman, unable to return on the route by which he had come, because no supplies were to be had in Azerbaijan, and was forced to withdraw through Kurdistan. He however occupied Baghdad. The second round of the Ottoman offensive opened the following year, and was directed by sultan Suleman from Baghdad. A number of engagements were fought at various points between Kurdistan and the Armenian highlands. The third Ottoman inroad occurred in 955/1548, and like the first, was on a massive scale. Shah Tahmasp made his usual preparations to meet the new onslaught. He had the entire area between Tabriz and the Ottoman frontier laid waste, so that no trace of grain or blade of grass remained. The Ottomans once again occupied Tabriz, but their forces soon began to suffer acutely from lack of provisions. When their pack-animals began to die like flies, sultan Suleman again beat the retreat. Shah Tahmasp had already transferred his capital from Tabriz to Qazwin. The fourth and last onslaught by the Ottomans during the reign of sultan Suleman was conducted in 960/1553. Peace was finally signed at Amasya in 962/1555, and Iran obtained a much needed respite from Ottoman inroads.

The Mughal dynasty was founded by Babar in India. He was a Chaghatai Turk who originally sought to establish his own state in his native Central Asia. Blocked in Central Asia by the Uzbeks, he established himself in Kabul, and invaded India in 932/1526 from his base in Afghanistan. He thus founded the Mughal empire, and died in 937/1530. He was succeeded by Humayun, who had been repelled by Sher Shah Suri (947-952/1540-1545). Humayun had to take refuge in Iran with Shah Tahmasp. With the aids of Shah Tahmasp, Humayun finally restored his Indian domains after 15 years. Shah Tahmasp spread his influence in India, and tied his relation with Burhan Nizam Shah and Shah Tahir Hussain of Ahmadnagar.

The Ismailis had mostly joined the Safavid army in Khorasan, some of them held high posts. The Safavid retained their relation with the Imam. Imam Nuruddin Ali however advised his followers to be very watchful, because Shah Tahmasp was a man of great cruelty.

Like his father, Imam Nuruddin Ali also used to visit different villages to see and guide his followers. It is related that in Dizbad, once the Ismaili women assembled in a house to weave

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cotton with Khaki Khorasani, who was yet a boy. Imam Nuruddin Ali happened to come there and entered the room to see his followers. He then went out and mounted his horse. Khaki Khorasani urged the Imam reverently to take him along, but the Imam said, "When you will be able to pass a comb through your beard, then I will take you with me." The child made the gesture to touch his beardless face. The Imam however took him along, and rode together towards the end of the village, where today from a rock, gushes a spring of Naw Hisar. They had an intimate conversation, and in the course of which the Imam advised his young disciple to work on the path of God if he would like to achieve his goal for salvation. This incident marked the outset of the poetical and missionary career of Khaki Khorasani.

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The Imam retained the tradition of *vakil* in Hind and Sind. The tradition of *numainda* (representative) was retained in Badakhshan, and the local chiefs were selected for the office. Imam Nuruddin Ali began to appoint the *vakil*, *numainda* or *hujjat* from his family members, and the local chiefs were directed to work under them. This newly system gave a gravity to the Ismaili mission. The names of many other *vakils* in Central Asia are found without their biographies, and it is difficult to locate their periods.

The Ismaili poet Mahmud Ali was hailed from Mominabad. In his one long poem, Mahmud Ali names the Ismaili *da'is, mu'allims* and lesser functionaries in numerous localities in Khorasan, Kohistan, Irak-i Ajam, Kirman, Afghanistan, Badakhshan, Turkistan and the Indian subcontinent, including Multan, Lahore and Gujrat.

Imam Nuruddin Ali consigned the office of Imamate to his son, Khalilullah Ali, and died in 957/1550 in Anjudan. The details of his other five sons are inaccessible.

KHALILULLAH ALI I (957-993/1550-1585), 39TH IMAM

Mirza Khalil, mostly known as Khalilullah Ali I was born in Anjudan. It is related that Imam Nuruddin Ali nominated him as his successor in presence of the Indian and Syrian Ismaili pilgrims at Anjudan.

Imam Khalilullah Ali is said to have examined the economical conditions of the poor Ismailis residing in Iran, India, Syria, Badakhshan and Central Asia, and sent necessary aids through his family members. He also reviewed the then system of Ismaili mission of different regions, and caused vital changes specifically in the religious practices in India.

Between 947/1540 and 960/1553, the Safavid Shah Tahmasp waged four expeditions in the Caucasus, and brought a large number of Georgian, Circassian and Armenian prisoners in Iran, including women and slaves. There had been a serious struggle in acquiring power in the principal posts between the Iranians and the Turks, known as Kizilbash. The prisoners of Caucasus hence had been given military training as the "third force" of the empire. Thus, the introduction of the Tajik element changed the character of the Safavid society. They proved very loyal to the empire until the death of Shah Tahmasp. When he fell ill in 982/1574 for about two months, there was a recrudescence of dissension among the Kizilbash chiefs. The Tajik women in the royal *harem* also jumped into the political intrigue to advance the claims of their respective sons to the succession. The nine sons of Shah Tahmasp were familiar in the different military units, and each unit came up to support the respective sons for the next ruler. Muhammad Khudabanda, the elder son was ill. The second son Ismail was in prison for twenty years since 1556. The other seven sons belonged to Circassian or Georgian mothers, each was expecting the throne for their own sons. Shah Tahmasp died in 984/1576. The Georgian made an unsuccessful attempt to place Hyder on the throne, and his supporters raided the capital city, but failed and Hyder was killed. Finally, about thirty thousand Kizilbash thronged at the prison, and released Ismail and crowned him at Qazwin as Shah Ismail II on August 22, 1576 at the age of 40 years.

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Shah Ismail II first of all executed and blinded those princes, who were responsible for his long punishment, including his five brothers. He abandoned the doctrines of Twelver and banned the practice of *tabarra*. The Kizilbash generals began to realize that Shah Ismail II was not a sort of ruler they had expected. They got him killed with the help of his sister, Pari Khan Khanum by poison in 985/1577. The Kizilbash crowned Muhammad Khudabanda, the elder brother of Shah Ismail II. He was one among those persons, who had been ordered by Shah Ismail II for execution, but was survived owing to some sorts of delay. He had been in Herat during the death of Shah Ismail II, and reached at Qazwin from Shiraz. It implied that the Safavid throne remained without a king for three months. Finally, Muhammad Khudabanda assumed power in 985/1578. He was a mild, and his eye-sight was so weak that he was virtually blind. He took no interest in state affairs, and remained in composing poems under the pen-name, *Fahmi*. His wife Mahd-i Ulya however governed the state by a council of the Kizilbash officers, whom she ignored, and replaced by the Iranian officers. She had planned to make her own son to succeed her husband, and conspired to remove the capable son of Muhammad Khudabanda, called Abbas being born to other wife. Abbas was in Herat and thus, he escaped from the conspiracy.

The Ottoman sultan Murad III (1574-1595) invaded Azerbaijan and Georgia with one lac soldiers in 986/1578. The Safavid forces suffered a long series of defeat. On the other side, the dispute between Mahd-i Ulya and Kizilbash officers had shaken the foundation of the empire. She had been killed by Kizilbash, and the whole power came with the military. The army of Ustajlu-Shamlu in Khorasan, the Afshars in Afghanistan, and the Kizilbash in Qazwin and northern region were divided among themselves. They began to fight one another and violated the law and order in supporting the different sons of Muhammad Khudabanda. The notable princes being supported by the above three military groups were Hamza, Abu Talib and Abbas. Hamza was killed in 1586, therefore, the Kizilbash turned their support to Abu Talib. Under such fratricidal disputes for the throne, Shah Muhammad Khudabanda had been forced to abandon the throne in favour of Abbas in 996/1588, who was about 17 years old. Murshid Quli Khan, the leader of Ustajlu-Shamlu in Khorasan supported him, who had been invested the title of *vakil* of the supreme *diwan*. The new king Shah Abbas negotiated a peace treaty with the Ottoman sultan in 997/1589, and also began to repel the Uzbek inroads from eastern side.

Imam Khalilullah Ali is said to have held a conference of the *da'is* of different regions in Anjudan to review the mission activities. He made few vital changes in the system in Syria and India, and issued necessary orders abreast of time in various regions. Imam Khalilullah Ali seems to have organized a best system of his contacts with the Ismailis of Iran, Syria, Badakhshan and India. He had employed in this context a certain Zayn al-Abidin bin Hussain bin Khushnam Angawani (d. 961/1554), who knew many languages. He was assigned to write letters, bearing official seal to the Ismaili communities as per the instructions of the Imam.

The Nusairi zealots had raided and pillaged the Ismaili villages in Syria in 1569. They captured the strongholds of Masiyaf and Qadmus, which was informed to the Imam by the Syrian pilgrims. It is related that Imam Khalilullah Ali dispatched an embassy to the Ottoman authority in Latakia, and as a result, the Nusairis withdrew from Masiyaf and Qadmus after three years.

The Iranian Ismailis mostly professed in agriculture. Later on, few among them are reported to have ventured into the local trade, and became leading merchants in Kirman. Their rapid progress can be judged from the records that the Ismaili merchants of Kirman dominated the trade at port Hormuz around 1580. They mostly carried their trade with the Portuguese, and then with the English East India Company in 1610. There are certain indications that the Khoja Ismaili traders also launched their commercial activities between port Hormuz and Kutchh.

The Ismaili ruler of Gilgit, Raja Trakhan (1310-1335) was succeeded by Raja Somul (1335-1390). The third ruler was Raja Khusaro Khan (1390-1435), then Raja Hyder Khan (1435-1480), Raja Chalis Khan (1480-1515) and Raja Nur Khan (1515-1565). It means that the Ismailis ruled Gilgit absolutely for about 255 years. But, the seventh ruler Raja Mirza Khan (1565-1600) was invaded by Ali Sher Khan Anchan (1595-1633), the ruler of Skardu. Raja Mirza Khan took flight to Baltistan and lived as a refugee with the Maqpon ruler, Raja Ghazi Mir (1565-1595), who had died

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a month later. Raja Mirza married to the daughter of the ruler, and became a Twelver. He took field against Gilgit with colossal means and materials he acquired from the new ruler, Raja Ali Sher Khan (1600-1632), and subdued Ali Sher Khan Anchan at Gilgit, and reinstated his rule. Henceforward, he forced the inhabitants to follow the doctrines of the Twelver. The Ismailis observed strict *taqiya*, and were also known as the Mughli.

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Imam Khalilullah Ali I died at Kahek in 993/1585, but he was buried in Anjudan. It seems that the Ismailis were thickly populated in Anjudan, therefore, it was resolved to settle few families in Kahek in Kirman. According to another tradition, the Twelvers and Nuqtawiyas also lived in Anjudan and its locality, therefore, the governor of Hamadan had appointed a certain Shi'a leader, called Syed Khalilullah as the *amir* of Anjudan after Imam's departure from the village in 992/1584. An epigraph discovered by Farhad Daftary at Anjudan is allegedly collated with the preceding move. It reproduces the text of a royal edict issued by Shah Abbas II in Rajab, 1036/March-April, 1627 addressing to Amir Khalilullah Anjudani, for the exemption of certain taxes, wherein the Anjudani Shi'as are explicitly regarded as the Twelvers. Farhad Daftary however identifies Amir Khalilullah Anjudani as Imam Zulfikar Ali, who was also known as Khalilullah. The balance of arguments points that it is almost a tentative speculation, and its historicity is doubtful.

NIZAR II (993-1038/1585-1628), 40TH IMAM

Imam Nizar was born in 982/1574 in Anjudan, and ascended at the age of 11 years. He is known as Shah Ataullah among the Iranian mystics. His father had brought him in Kahek in 992/1584, and henceforward, Kahek became the next headquarters. Kahek or Kiagrak is situated about 35 kilometers northeast of Anjudan and north-west of Mahallat. It took few years to the Ismailis to settle in Kahek and its locality. He also founded a village near Kuhubandi, known as Kahek of Aqa Nizar, then became known as Bagh-i Takhat. The colony of the farmers in this village was also known as Nizarabad.

The Ismaili merchants of Kirman are said to have built a small palace for Imam Nizar in Kahek, which became known as Kahek-i Shah Nizar, where a small marble platform was erected in a garden, facing the palace. It is said that the Imam would sit on this platform, which was surrounded by water, when giving audience. His guests would be placed amid flower beds on the other side of the water.

The Safavid Shah Abbas ruled Iran from 995/1588 to 1038/1628. He restored peace with severe actions. He reduced the number of provincial governors to curb the power of Kizilbash, and took punitive action against them for their disloyalty. Shah Abbas also turned to the third force, which Shah Tahmasp had introduced into the state, and created their regiments which constituted the nucleus of a standing army. He also took the power of collecting revenue from the Kizilbash. The chief of the Ustajlu faction in Khorasan, Murshid Quli Khan, was a powerful Kizilbash leader, who was responsible for placing Shah Abbas on the throne. He had assumed that, as in the past, he would be able to bend the king to his will. Shah Abbas had him executed in 996/1589. Hence, the Uzbeks overran the province of Sistan, and invaded Mashhad, but it was repulsed. In 1005/1598, Shah Abbas transferred his capital from Qazwin to Ispahan. He expanded his influence in Herat and defeated the Uzbeks, and annexed Balkh in his state. In 1014/1605, he attacked on the Turks and recovered Tabriz.

Shah Abbas is noted as a great builder, and so was very cruel. In 1024/1615, he executed his son, Muhammad Bakir, the then governor of Khorasan. His another son Hasan predeceased him. In 1030/1621, when he fell ill, his third son Muhammad prematurely celebrated his death. When Shah Abbas recovered, he blinded Muhammad. In 1035/1626, he blinded his only surviving son, Quli Mirza. Hence, he had no male issue to succeed him. He died in 1038/1629 after ruling for 42

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years, and was succeeded by his grandson, Sam Mirza, surnamed Shah Shafi, the son of Muhammad Bakir.

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The Ottoman empire was sunk into the internal disputes after sultan Suleman, and lost many regions from the Safavids. Unemployment, poor exports and the worsening condition of the peasants had badly paralyzed the economy of Turkey. The Safavid Shah Abbas used to export the silken costumes and carpets to Europe through the port of Turkey, but it was stopped because of the newly formed Port Abbas in Iran, resulting another heavy crack in the tax-income of Turkey. In sum, the Ottoman empire began to come in its ebb.

Roger Savory writes in **Iran under the Safavids** (New York, 1980, p. 91) that, "We have seen the period from the establishment of the Safavid state in 1501, upto the accession of Shah Abbas I in 1588, was one of change and experiment. An attempt was made to incorporate the original Sufi organization of the Safavid Order in the administrative structure of the state." Thus, under Shah Abbas, the Sufism came to life once again.

When Shah Abbas I tolerated Sufism in Iran, the tide also turned in favour of the Ismaili mission, providing benign climate to the *da'is* to propagate Ismailism. Imam Nizar is thus reported to have gone to Khorasan in 1014/1606 with few *da'is*, where he concealed his identity, and assumed a Sufi sounding name, Shah Ataullah among the Nimatullahis. He became the *qutb* (pole) of the Nimatullahis most probably in Nishapur, Marw, Herat, Balkh and Sebzewar in Khorasan province. Imam Nizar was probably the first Ismaili Imam to become the spiritual master of the Nimatullahis.

It seems that many Nimatullahis, the followers of Imam Nizar known as Ataullahis secretly adhered Ismailism in Khorasan. When Imam Nizar left Khorasan for Kirman, some of them also joined him. It appears from one extant *qasida* that Imam Nizar had composed few *qasida* for them.

The Ismailis in Iran mostly resided in Khorasan, Kirman, Fars and Anjudan. The Ismailis, known as Ataullahis lived in Kirman as the peasants. The Ismailis in Fars were nomadic tribesmen, who were also called as Ataullahis. It is related that a number of slaves of Abayssinia escaped from being sold at Port Abbas, and took refuge in Kirman and embraced Ismailism. They were very faithful warriors and rendered their services to Imam Nizar as guards.

Mulla Shaikh Ali Gilani writes in **Tarikh-i Mazandaran** (comp. in 1044/1634, pp. 88-89) that, "Sultan Muhammad, the Banu Iskandar ruler of Kujur, who succeeded his father in 975/1567 was an Ismaili. He openly emboldened the propagation of Ismailism in Rustamdar. He seized Nur and other localities in Mazandaran and spread Ismaili creed as far as Sari. He died in 998/1590, and was succeeded by his eldest son Jahangir, who was also deep-rooted in Ismailism. He was obliged to go to the court of the Safavid Shah Abbas I, following the latter's conquest of Gilan and other Caspian provinces in 1000/1592. Later, Jahangir returned to Rustamdar, but was arrested by the local lieutenant of Shah Abbas I, who had led a large force against him. Jahangir was sent to Qazwin, where he was executed in 1006/1598."

In Syria, the inroads of the bigoted Nusairis recurred on the Ismaili villages in 999/1591, and pillaged their properties. This time, the Ismailis repelled the band of Nusairis from their territories with their own resources.

Kahek was made the new headquarters in Kirman after Anjudan. Syed Abdul Nabi was an Indian *vakil*, who visited Kahek. He was rejoiced to behold Imam Nizar in the garden, facing the palace, which he relates in his *ginan* that: - "I enjoyed a trip with the Imam, when my Lord was in the garden." Syed Abdul Nabi's another *ginan* also gives condensed account that:- "The everlasting Lord resides in Kahek in the very form of Ali. The apparent Imam Nizar is the 77th epiphany of God, and the 40th Imam."

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Syed Abdul Nabi mostly preached in Gujrat. In Surat, he came into the close contact of the Gupti Momina Ismailis. He used to organize a weekly religious gathering, known as *satsang* (the pious congregation) in which the local Hindu families were also invited, notably the Laiwala, Naginawala and Jamiatram families. Syed Abdul Nabi died in Surat, and his mausoleum is situated at Kankara Khadi, near Surat.

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In India, the Kadiwal Syeds continued the Ismaili mission despite several impediments. Fourth in the line of Syed Mashaikh bin Syed Rehmatullah Shah bin Pir Hasan Kabir, was Syed Fazal Shah; who operated proselytizing mission in north Gujrat with a tremendous effect upon the local peasants. He is said to have visited Iran in 1035/1625 during the period of Imam Nizar and was appointed as a *vakil*. The tradition relates that Imam Nizar also sent with him his one relative, called Pir Kassim Shah. Both of them not only conducted the proselytism afresh, but also accelerated the economical condition of the Ismailis. Pir Kassim Shah died around 1121/1710, and was buried in a village, called Mudana, two miles from Sidhpur. Thus, Hasan Pir had to administer the mission in Gujrat and Kathiawar, and died probably in 1126/1715.

Imam Nizar died in Kahek in 1038/1628 and was entombed in his small palace, which had been made a domed sepulcher. It is an eye-catching building in Kahek, consisting of different chambers. It also accommodated the graves of Imam's close relatives, but the dates inscribed in the graves are concocted. The mausoleum was renovated in 1805 by the Syrian pilgrims, who stayed in Kahek for many months, and it was again rebuilt in 1966 by the local Ismailis.

The dates of the Ismaili Imams of the post-Alamut period are well recorded in the **Satveni'ji Vel** by Syed Nur Muhammad Shah (d. 940/1534) down to the period of Imam Nuruddin Ali (d. 957/1550). It also prompted the Indian Ismailis to write down the dates of the following Imams. The Russian scholar W. Ivanow visited Iran in 1937 and noted the dates of Imams' death from the plaques on the existing mausoleums. While collating the dates of the inscriptions with the traditional records, it seems that the dates of few early Imams are almost in agreement, but other dates are in fair contrast, making a layer of confusion to reconcile them. For instance, the death of Imam Nizar is placed 1038/1628 in the traditional records, but the inscription of mausoleum places 1134/1722, indicating a discrimination of about 94 years. It is, however, much nearer to reasonable possibility that the Indian Ismailis had been in close contact with the Imams after Pir Sadruddin's time in Iran, and they had treasured up the traditional records in their memories, therefore, the traditional dates cannot be ruled out. Besides, there is another testimony equally potent that Pir Sadruddin is said to have composed a daily prayer for the Indian followers, wherein the names of the Imams from Hazrat Ali down to the Imam of the time were recited. When an Imam died, the name of his successor was added in the daily prayer. Under such practice, the traditional records seem more credible than that of the inscriptions. It seems probable that most of the mausoleums and their inscriptions existed long after the death of the Imams, and none can assert that the scribes had either written the actual dates, or the dates of their own time, or written on guess work. Take it for granted that the inscriptions provide true record, then one would have to brush aside few names of the Imams from the official list, so as to adjust the history with the dates of inscriptions. The Indian pilgrims most possibly had visited the mausoleums of the Imams and seen the inscriptions, had these really existed during their time. In spite of reading the extant inscriptions, the Indian pilgrims of later period seem to have clung with their own dominant records, which is ample to judge that they had discarded the uncertain dates of inscriptions. In all this, what should have become abundantly clear is that all the dates of the inscriptions are not to be trusted. We have many instances that the inscriptions of some Sufi saints in Iran had been wrongly inscribed in their shrines too.

SAYED ALI (1038-1071/1628-1660), 41th IMAM

Imam Syed Ali was born most probably in Shahr-i Babak, where he passed his early life with his mother. He also came in Kahek after his father's arrival from Khorasan. He was also known as Shah Ataullah II among the Nimatullahi Sufi order. He was a popular figure as an *amir* in Shahr-i

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Babak and Kirman in the elites. He is also known as *Rais al-Kirman* (Lord of Kirman), an honour, which promoted him to the governorship of Kirman. He was also a leading landlord, and had acquired many lands in Shahr-i Babak and Sirjan. He built many streets in Kirman, known after his name, none of them existed during the Qajarids period.

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Shah Abbas I was on the verge of death when he had no son to succeed him. He died in 1038/1629, and was succeeded by his grandson, Sam Safi, known as Shah Safi. Sir John Chardin, who was visiting Iran in 1077/1666 had remarked in his **Voyages du Chevalier Chardin en Perse** (Paris, 1811, 3:291) that: "When this great prince (Shah Abbas) ceased to live, Persia ceased to prosper." Under Shah Safi, the conversion of "state" to "crown" provinces was extended. His *vizir* Sadru Taqi put forward an argument which the new king found attractive, since the Safavid state was now relatively secure from its external enemies, he said, there was no point in allowing a large part of Safavid territory to remain in the hands of Kizilbash governors, who remitted little to the royal treasury. Thus, the provinces of Qazwin, Gilan, Mazandaran, Yazd, Kirman, Khorasan and Azerbaijan were all brought under the administration of the crown except in time of war, when Kizilbash governors were reappointed.

Shah Safi died at the early age of 32 years, as he was making preparations for an expedition to recover Kandhar from the Mughals. He was succeeded by his son, Abbas II, who came to the throne in 1052/1642 at the age of eight and a half. We may be well assured that the Ismailis acquired respite in the absence of political turmoil. Shah Abbas II managed to preserve the frontier of the empire intact, and even recaptured Kandhar from the Mughals in 1058/1648 and repulsed three subsequent attempts by the emperor Aurengzeb to recover it.

Heretofore, we have discussed that Shah Abbas I had attempted to incorporate the Sufi elements in the administrative structure in 1588, and as a result, many Kizilbash embraced Sufism in Iran. The Ismaili *da'is* began to preach in the cloak of Sufis, and there are certain indications that many Kizilbash had privily come under the yoke of Ismailism in the time of Imam Nizar. Thus, Imam Syed Ali also assumed among them the Turkish sounding name, Syed Abul Hasan Beg.

The liberal policy towards the Sufism declined in Iran with the death of Shah Abbas in 1038/1629. The Sufis began to be persecuted and killed, and their *khanaqahs* were demolished. The Sufis were searched from all corners and scourged to death. The Nimatullahi Sufi order was also not spared, and before the massacre of the Ismailis, known as Ataullahis in Khorasan and Kirman, Imam Syed Ali ordered them to join the royal army at once, which avoided the danger of massacre. It is known that a small regiment of Ataullahis in the Safavid army, was also created in Khorasan and Kirman.

Khaki Khorasani was a famous Ismaili poet. It is however probable that he had composed his poems between 1037/1627 and 1056/1645, making description of Imam Zulfikar Ali (d. 922/1516) and Imam Nuruddin Ali (d. 975/1550). The Safavids did not spare Khaki Khorasani and imprisoned him till death. It seems that he died most probably around 1056/1646.

Imam Syed Ali was made the governor of Shahr-i Babak by the Safavids because of his popularity. He had also a small army of Ataullahis. He died in 1071/1660 in Kirman after bequeathing the Imamate to his son, Hasan Ali.

HASAN ALI (1071-1106/1660-1694), 42ND IMAM

Hasan Ali I, also known as Bakir Shah was born in Kahek. He had also gone to the city of Kirman with his father, but returned to Kahek after assuming the Imamate. In 1085/1674, he betrothed to a Safavid lady, and soon afterwards, there is likelihood that the Imam had taken certain interest in the political arena. In 1105/1693, he was made the governor of Kirman.

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The cursory glance of the Iranian empire reveals that Shah Abbas II had died in 1077/1666. He was succeeded by Shah Suleman. Henceforward, the Safavid kingdom took a rapid march towards decline. Under weak and ineffective king, the *ulema* tended to reassert their independence of the political institution, and were at the height of their power. The *mujtahids* fully reasserted their independence of the Shah, and reclaimed their prerogative to be the representatives of their hidden Imam. The *mujtahids* moved gradually towards a position of actually controlling the king. Some sources suggest a direct religious rule by means of a concourse of *mujtahids* above the monarch.

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The Russian ambassador also visited Iran to conclude a truce, and as a result, Mazandaran, Jurjan etc. went into the pocket of Russia. The Ottoman sultans in Turkey were also so weak that the whole empire had been isolated in different states. They however marched in Europe, near Vienna, but the Russians were devouring the Turkish territories behind the door.

Imam Hasan Ali directed the Ismaili mission in view of the changing situation of Iran. The names of few Ismaili *da'is*, viz., Pir Mihrab Beg, Pir Ali Asghar Beg and Pir Ali Akbar Beg are however located, but nothing is known about them. The Turkish word *beg* in their names however sounds that they would have preached in the Iranian regions inhabited by the Turkomans, or more possibly, had come into the contact of the Kizilbash circle in Iran.

In the flourishing liberty of the Shi'ite *mujtahids* in Iran, the latent differences came readily to the fore. Two major schools of theological thought emerged in Shi'ite society. The majority stressed constant reference to the first principles, to all the sources (*usul*) of law: these were the Koran, reports about the Prophet and the Imams. They became known as the Usuli. But a vigorously protesting movement arose, which threw doubt on the validity of reason as an independent basis of law; it stressed the massive use of reports (*akhbar*) were available from Prophet and the Imams, and they were known as the Akhbari. One of the most important features of this period is the greatly enhanced influence of the religious classes as they freed themselves from political control apart from the internal differences of the Usuli and Akhbari groups. Powerful theologians emerged, of whom a typical example is Muhammad Bakir Majlisi (1037-1110/1628-1699), who held the office of *Shaikh al-Islam* in 1687, and then as *Mulla-bashi* (head of the *mullas*) until his death.

It is a significant point that the Usuli and Akhbari Shi'ite groups jointly made the Sufis as their victims. Under these circumstances, the Ismailis had to change their Sufic mantles to the Shi'ite. It appears that Imam Hasan Ali also followed similar trend in Kirman, and adopted the Shi'ite sounding name, Bakir Shah few years before becoming the governor of Kirman in 1105/1693. It is also said that he had purchased some estates in Baghdad, Basra and Kazamain Sharif. The last will of the Imam, indicating his burial in Najaf also suggests a sort of *taqiya* in Shi'ite garb.

The Safavid Shah Suleman is reported to have used the fortress of Alamut as a state prison for the rebellious persons from among his courtiers, *amirs* and relatives. At that time, only a few Ismaili families resided in the lower Caspian region.

Imam Hasan Ali I executed the governorship of Kirman for one year, and died in 1106/1694, and his body had been taken to Najaf for interment.

KASSIM ALI (1106-1143/1694-1730), 43RD IMAM

Imam Kassim Ali was born most probably in 1086/1675. He was also known as Syed Aga Jafar, or Syed Jafar. His mother related to a Safavid *amir* of Kirman. According to the later sources, Imam had married to one of the daughters of Shah Tahmasp II (d. 1145/1732).

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His period of Imamate witnessed several vital cataclysm in Iranian kingdom, therefore, the Ismaili mission exercised great care. Imam Kassim Ali also took part in the politics like his father, and was also the governor of Kirman. He however came to reside in Mahallat during the ending period of his Imamate.

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In 1115/1703, the Nusairis tribe of Raslan, known as al-Rasalina fiercely attacked on the Ismaili villages in Syria, and took hold of Masiyaf for about eight years. The Ottoman authorities at Latakia, finally assisted the Ismailis to recover their castle. Thus, one Syrian Ismaili caravan is however reported to have repaired to Kirman between 1117/1705 and 1120/1708. During the occupation of Masiyaf, some Ismaili families moved towards the northern Syria and began to live in the mantles of the Druzes at Jabal al-A'la, the mountain of Keftin, where their number increased considerably after few decades. Carsten Niebuhr (1733-1815), the famous German traveller was invited in 1760 to join the Arabian expedition being sent out by Frederick V of Denmark. He writes in **Voyage en Arabie et en d' austres pays circonvoisins** (tr. from German, Amsterdam, 1870, 2:348) that he was not certain whether the inhabitants of this district were indeed the Druzes. He was reportedly told that there were more than forty villages populated by Druzes; however, he suspected their veracity because, he said, the people looked like the Ismailis.

Later, the Ismailis began to reside in peace in the town of Masiyaf. Abdul Ghani al-Nabulusi, a famous mystic and traveller had passed through Masiyaf in 1106/1693-4, and describes in his **al-Hakika wa'l majaz fi rihlat al-Sham wa Misr wa'l Hijaz** about a certain Ismaili, called Suleman Tanukhi as a chief of the town.

The Safavid Shah Suleman died in 1105/1693, and was succeeded by his son Shah Hussain, who ruled till 1135/1722. Shah Hussain soon abandoned his austere way of life and, like his father took to drink. He became so luxurious that the size and magnificence of his *harem* was a serious drain of the exchequer. Like his father, he had no interest in state affairs, which was distressing and ultimately disastrous aspect of the empire. Within the empire, this lack of interest signalled increasing corruption and inefficiency in provincial government. Insecurity on the highways was widespread. Often travellers were robbed by the very officials who were supposed to protect them.

According to Rida Quli Khan in **Raudat al-Safa'i Nasiri** (Tehran, 1853) that, "After the accession of Shah Hussain in 1105/1693, the signs of decline (*inhitat*), nay, rather, of extinction (*inqirad*) of the life of the dynasty became from day to day manifest." By the time of Shah Hussain, the bureaucratic centralization of the state structure was weakened through incompetence, and cloven by bigoted in high places. The military weakness of the state was thrown into sharp relief in 1110/1698 when a band of Baluchi tribesmen raided Kirman, almost reached Yazd and threatened Port Abbas. Shah Hussain turned to the Georgian prince Giorgi XI, who happened to be at the Safavid court, for help in repelling the Baluchis. Giorgi was made governor of Kirman in 1111/1699 and defeated the invaders. Ten years after the Baluchis incursion, the military feebleness of the Safavid empire and, in particular, the defenseless state of the eastern frontier, was demonstrated again, and this time with more serious consequences for the state. In 1121/1709, the Gilzay Afghans under their leader, Mir Vays, seized Kandhar and killed Giorgi. After Mir Vays's death in 1127/1715, his brother Abul Aziz succeeded him as chief of the Gilzay Afghans. In 1128/1716, Mehmud, the eldest son of Mir Vays, became the chief of Gilzay Afghans and attacked Kirman. Shah Hussain had to leave Ispahan for Qazwin, therefore, Mehmud took chance to march ahead, and subdued a small military unit and occupied Ispahan in 1134/1722.

In 1127/1715, the Tzar Peter the Great, sent Artemii Petrovich Volynsky as an ambassador to Shah Hussain; he was to conclude a commercial treaty with Iran. He also collected secrecy of Iranian resources and important communication. Volynsky reported that the general situation in Iran was so disturbed, and the army so demoralized and inefficient, that the country could easily be conquered by a small Russian army. By 1133/1721, if not before, the Tzar had decided to invade Iran. He showing of the flag in the Caspian coastal provinces in 1134/1722 had occasioned great alarm in Istanbul, and there was a flurry of diplomatic activity as the possibility of war between

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Russia and Turkey became stronger or receded. The outcome was the Russo-Ottoman Treaty for the partition of Iran's north-west provinces, dated June 24, 1724. The dismemberment of Iran was short-lived. Six Russian battalions landed in Gilan in 1135/1723, and another Russian forces captured Baku. Hence, Iran's Caspian provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran and Astrabad had gone in the Russian pocket. On the other side, the European merchants started their dominion on the principal sea-ports of the Muslim countries.

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Imam Kassim Ali was made the governor of Kirman in 1106/1694, but when the Baluchi tribesmen had raided Kirman in 1110/1698, the military control was assigned to the Georgian prince Giorgi XI by making him the governor of those parts of Kirman which had been affected by the invaders.

In Kirman, the village land was divided into six shares (*dang*), each of which comprised one-sixth of the village water supply together with the land watered thereby. Imam Kassim Ali was the governor of the three villages, viz. Shahr-i Babak, Kahek and Mahallat. The Safavid authority accorded him due permission to create an Ataullahi regiment in the Safavid military for security against the Baluchi invaders.

In 1134/1722, an appalling drought reduced the inhabitants of Kirman and Ispahan to the last extremity. It was so severe that hundreds of rotting corpses clogged the streets. At least 80,000 people are said to have perished from starvation and disease. It is learnt that a bulk of the Ismailis from Fars with the governor started from Ispahan to help the affected persons, but Mehmud, the chief of Gilzay Afghans had occupied Ispahan on December 25, 1722 and was proclaimed as a ruler, therefore, the Ismailis could not enter the city.

Shah Tahmasp II, the son of Shah Hussain ascended in 1134/1722 at Qazwin. He fled to Tabriz when Qazwin was shakened by the Afghans. The people of Qazwin repelled the Afghans. Mahmud however put to death many high officials and nobles, notably 3000 Kizilbash guards; cracking down the very backbone of the Safavid military. Thus suddenly was the whole fabric of the Safavid kingdom, bringing to an inglorious end. Mehmud was overthrown by his 26 years old cousin, called Ashraf in 1137/1725. At the time of his accession, Ashraf found himself in possession of Ispahan, Persian Irak, Fars, Kirman, Sistan, Qummis and western Khorasan. Shah Tahmasp II was the ruler of Qazwin and Mazandaran. In 1141/1729, Ashraf attacked the Safavids, but was defeated by Nadir Quli Beg, or Nadir Shah of Khorasan, the Safavid commander. He took possession of Ispahan and reinstated the Safavid monarchy by placing Shah Tahmasp II on the throne. Nadir then also drove away the Abdalis of Khorasan, and at last, he was made the chief commander of the Safavid military. These were the first outward signs that the tide had at last turned in Tahmasp favour, but a great deal had yet to be done.

In 1144/1732, just over two and a half years after Shah Tahmasp II had mounted the throne as a result of the restoration of the Safavid monarchy, he was forced by Nadir to abdicate in favour of his infant son Abbas III. Hence, Shah Tahmasp II spent the remainder of his unhappy and frustrated life in captivity. In 1148/1736, Shah Tahmasp II was joined by his son Shah Abbas III in prison when Nadir deposed him and captured the throne himself. Four years later, Shah Tahmasp II and his two sons Shah Abbas III and Ismail were put to death. Thus, Nadir Shah proclaimed the foundation of the Afsharid dynasty in 1148/1736.

Shah Ismail (1500-1524) had established the Safavid empire in Iran in 905/1500, which came to an end in 1148/1736 after a rule of about 236 years, from the time of Imam Abuzar Ali (d. 915/1509) to Imam Abul Hasan Ali (d. 1206/1792).

Imam Kassim Ali remained as a governor of Kirman for some times, and he came to Mahallat in 1204/1790. In Mahallat, he purchased many estates for his family, where he was very popular. It is related that the Imam frequently arranged convivial parties at his residence. He used to invite the nobles and officials on every year during the celebrations of Eid al-Ghadir and Navroz. He died in Mahallat in 1143/1730, where he was buried. He had many sons, but the prominent among them were Abul Hasan Ali, the successor and Mirza Muhammad Bakir.

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ABUL HASAN ALI (1143-1206/1730-1792), 44TH IMAM

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Imam Abul Hasan Ali was also known as Syed Shah Muhammad Hasan Shah, Hasan Beg and Abul Hasan Ali Shah. He was born in Shahr-i Babak. The Iranian sources called him, Abul Hasan Kaheki, a name mostly was popular among the inhabitants of Kahek, whom he generously helped for about two times. One of the ways he utilized his wealth was to serve delicious dishes strewn with ample varieties of food to the hungry and needy while he himself would seldom taste it.

Imam Abul Hasan was the governor of Kirman during the Afsharid and Zand periods. It seems almost appropriate to mention that Imam Abul Hasan Ali was the first Ismaili Imam after the fall of Alamut to emerge slowly from obscurity. He was highly learned and a friend of the local Sufis. He had also patronized the local artists. Few chambers of the Imam's residence are reported to have been decorated with the rare collection of the Iranian paintings.

He was a prominent land-owner (*Sahib amlak wa raqabat*) in Kirman. According to **Athar-i Muhammadi** (p. 70), "When the Afghans had launched terrible raids in Iran, Imam Abul Hasan Ali had laid the foundation of a strong edifice of the fort in Kiab on the shore of Hibala and Depine, lying between Rugan and Jinjan, where he began to reside after its completion."

Nadir, the last great Asiatic conqueror was born in 1102/1688 in Afshar tribe of Khorasan. He was the son of a certain Imam Quli, and was tending flocks after his father's death. Later, he became a leader of the plundering band. In 1138/1726, the Safavid Shah Tahmasp II learnt his valour, and acquired his help to repel the Gilzay Afghans from Iran. Nadir readily responded the call and came with his troop of 5000 Kurd and Afshar warriors. He was hailed and granted the title of *Tahmasp Quli Khan*. Nadir took field against the Gilzay Afghans by commanding the Safavid army, and inflicted them a defeat. Shah Tahmasp II rejoiced on Nadir's role, and appointed him a chief commander (*qurchi-bashi*). In 1144/1732, Nadir deposed Shah Tahmasp II and crowned the latter's son Shah Abbas III. In 1148/1736, Nadir also deposed Shah Abbas III, and assumed the power, and thus he got the declination of the Safavid empire. He established the Afsharid rule in Iran, and fought with the Afghans and dominated Iran like Taymurlame. He also fought with the Turks and captured Iraq and Azerbaijan.

It appears that Imam Abul Hasan Ali had also maintained his best of ties with Nadir, and the seat of his governorship in Kirman coming from the period of the Safavids, remained intact during the Afsharid rule. When Nadir had been in Kirman in 1160/1747, according to **Athar-i Muhammadi** (p. 73), "Imam invited him at his residence and presented many valuable gifts." After Nadir, his successor Shah Rukh also retained his relation with Imam. John R. Perry writes in **Karim Khan Zand** (Chicago, 1979, pp. 135-6) that, "Abu'l-Hasan enjoyed the respect of all the leading citizens and even the provincial warlords and would seem the perfect choice for *beglerbegi* (governor-general) now that Kirman was relatively settled. On his appointment, therefore, Mirza Hosayn, Mortaza Qoli Khan, and the other local rulers meekly handed over their provinces to him. No details of his administration are recorded; he probably re-allocated the regions to several local khans and used his moral rather than military authority to check injustice. He remained on good terms with the leading men of the bureaucratic class, consulting them readily in matters of government." John R. Perry also adds, "After Nader's death, Sayyed Abu'l Hasan took a winter residence in Kirman itself, retaining his house at Babak for the summer. Shahrokh Khan accorded him great respect, even marrying his son Lotf Ali Khan to the Sayyed's (Imam's) daughter." (Ibid. p. 135)

In India, after the death of emperor Aurengzeb in 1707, the next Mughal rulers who followed him one after another were Bahadur Shah (1707-1712), Jahandar Shah (1712-1713), Farukh Siyar (1713-1719) and Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), in whose time, Nadir had conducted his expedition to India. Nadir set out from Nadirabad for Ghazna on May 21, 1738 and crossed the Indian frontiers with a gigantic army. He crossed Khyber Pass and reached Peshawar, and left it on January 6, 1739 for Lahore after passing through Wazirabad and Jhelum. He set off from Lahore on February 6, 1739 and proceeded to Sirhind, where he heard that the Mughal king

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Muhammad Shah had reached Karnal with 3 lac soldiers and 2000 elephants with a large deposit of cannon. Nadir ordered Nasrullah Mirza on February 24, 1739 to march from Jamna for Karnal, and he himself advanced in between Jamna and Ali Mardan Canal.

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The tradition relates that Imam Abul Hasan Ali had also accompanied Nadir during the operations, but it cannot be substantiated in the Indian sources. We may safely infer that Imam Abul Hasan Ali would have joined the regiment of Nasrullah Mirza in the operations of Karnal, had he truly accompanied.

Nadir finally entered Delhi on March 20, 1739 and pillaged the treasure of the Mughal empire. He took away huge money, jewels, diamonds and gold for the worth of about 70 crore of rupees, including the famous pea-cock throne and Koh'i Noor diamond. He left Delhi for Kabul. On December 9, 1739, he entered India once again to plunder Sind. He reached Dera Ismail Khan on January 5, 1740 and at Larkana on February 12, 1740 and pillaged gold, jewels and pearls amounting over one crore rupees from the ruler of Sind. Nadir left Sind on April 10, 1740. To this we must add the likelihood that Imam Abul Hasan Ali had availed chance to see his followers secretly in Sind, provided the tradition of his company is genuine. If so, he would have seen his followers when Nadir was hunting booty between January and April, 1740.

Nadir thus dominated Iran, Afghanistan and India. In Iran, he tried to solve differences of Usuli and Akhbari groups and also endeavoured to have the Jafari *fiqh* accepted as a fifth *fiqh* in the Sunni framework of the four schools of law. He also tried to overcome the Sunni theologians. Nadir was a brave campaigner, and so was cruel and proud, and had executed a large number of innocent people. He was at last killed in his tent near Mashhad in 1160/1747.

Immediately after the murder of Nadir, the Afghan and Turkoman leaders in Afsharid military collided each other for the treasures pillaged in India. Ahmad Shah Abdali (1747-1773) lastly succeeded to take away the whole lot to Kandhar and established the Dhurrani rule in Afghanistan in 1160/1747. In Iran, the southern Caucasus and Azerbaijan had been captured by the Afghan general called, Azad Khan. Another leader, Ali Mardan Khan occupied Ispahan, and Karim Khan Zand took Fars and Laristan.

Ali Quli Khan was the second Afsharid ruler, known as Adil Shah (1747-1748), the nephew of Nadir Shah; who ruled Khorasan. His brother Ibrahim (d.1161/1748) became the third ruler for few months. Shah Rukh, the son of Nadir escaped from prison at that time, and attacked on Khorasan, and became the fourth ruler for few months. He was deprived of his sight by his own Khorasani chiefs, and Murad Khan had been proclaimed as the fifth ruler. Murad Khan was also blinded, and once again the blind Shah Rukh was placed on the throne, who ruled till 1210/1795.

In sum, Iran was dominated by three rules at that time. Muhammad Hussain Qajar possessed northern region. The southern area was under the control of Karim Khan Zand, and Khorasan on eastern area was ruled by the Afsharids. Muhammad Hussain Qajar had been killed, and Karim Khan Zand took over the power of whole Iran, including Khorasan; and founded the rule of Zand dynasty in Iran in 1163/1750.

Karim Khan Zand (1163-1193/1750-1779) had a friendly relation with Imam Abul Hasan Ali and his brother Pir Mirza Muhammad Bakir. Mirza Hussain Khan, the governor of Kirman treated the Imam with great respect, who charged certain towns and districts of Kirman under the control of the Imam. Later on, Karim Khan Zand appointed the Imam as the Beglarbegi of Kirman in 1170/1756. According to **The Cambridge History of Iran** (London, 1991, 7:85), "Eventually, Karim Khan appointed as beglerbegi an Ismaili Sayyid, Abul Hasan Ali Shah Mahallati, well respected locally for piety and generosity. His moral authority overrode the petty squabbles of the regional military governors, and his ample private income precluded any necessity for extortion or peculation."

Karim Khan Zand died in 1193/1779, and Iran once again disintegrated. His brother Zaki Khan declared Muhammad Ali, the second son of Karim Khan, and his son-in-law as the second ruler of

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the Zands. Afterwards, Abul Fateh Khan, the elder son of Karim Khan was made a joint ruler with Muhammad Ali.

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Meanwhile, a certain Aga Muhammad Khan Qajar reached to Mazandaran, and took charge of his tribe in Astrabad, and declared his rule in 1193/1779 immediately after the death of Karim Khan Zand. Zaki Khan dispatched his forces in command of his nephew, called Ali Murad Khan against Aga Muhammad Khan. Instead of fighting with Aga Muhammad Khan, he himself rebelled against the Zands, and captured Ispahan. He levied high taxes on the landlords and put to death who refused. He also tortured many persons, and once he is said to have thrown out 18 persons from his window to a ditch. The people in Ispahan rebelled, and killed Zaki Khan. His brother Sadik Khan came in Shiraz and tore the eyes of Abul Fateh Khan from their sockets, and occupied Shiraz. In the succession disputes following Karim Khan Zand's death, the Imam is said to have lent his support to Sadik Khan, who was assisted in raising an army in Kirman. Sadik Khan restored the governorship of the Imam in Kirman. Imam's timely support to Sadik Khan had also avoided a massacre of the Ismailis. Meanwhile, the border region between Kirman and Afghanistan, including Narmashir, was raided by the Afghan and Baluchi troops of Azam Khan, an *amir* from Kandhar. Azam Khan was subdued by the Imam's forces, consisted of 7000 soldiers in command of Mirza Sadik, the cousin of the Imam. Later on, Azam Khan ravaged the districts of Kirman from Narmashir and reached as far as the entrance of the city of Kirman. This time, Imam Abul Hasan Ali himself commanded his forces from Shahr-i Babak and inflicted a defeat to Azam Khan outside Kirman.

Ali Murad Khan raided Shiraz and killed Sadik Khan, the brother of Zaki Khan in 1195/1781. Then followed Jafar Khan (1779-1785), the son of Sadik Khan, who defeated Aga Muhammad Khan Qajar many times. His son Lutf Ali Khan, the last ruler of the Zand dynasty attacked the rising power of the Qajarids in Ispahan in 1205/1790, but his advisor, Haji Ibrahim abandoned his side and joined Aga Muhammad Khan. Lutf Ali Khan proceeded to Sirjan, intending to occupy Shahr-i Babak and the stronghold of the Imam, guarded by the Ataullahi Ismailis. Imam Abul Hasan Ali had fortified and well-provisioned fortress in Shahr-i Babak under the command of Mirza Sadik. Lutf Ali Khan failed to gain Shahr-i Babak, and committed massacres of the Ismailis in the localities. He advanced to the city of Kirman. On that junction, Imam Abul Hasan Ali refused to allow his entry in the city, and reinforced the city's defence and prepared to withstand a long siege. After one day of the siege, the inhabitants of the city sent out the *Qadi* and *Shaikh al-Islam* to the camp of Lutf Ali Khan with an offering of 20,000 *tumans*, imploring him to raise the siege and postpone the occupation of the city.

Hasan-i Fasai compiled his **Farsnama'yi Nasiri** in 1314/1896 (tr. by Heribert Busse, London, 1972, pp. 37-8), who writes, "Lotf Ali Khan, however, was full of pride and said that he would not raise the siege before Seiyed Abu'l Hasan Khan Kaheki, the governor of Kirman, and all the nobles and aldermen had come out of the city to the encampment. When the *Qadi* and *Shaikh al-Islam* returned unsuccessful to the city, Abu'l Hasan Khan took greater care in the defence of the fortress than he had done before. When the winter came and roads and paths were blocked by snow and rain, the camp was cut off from provisions. For some time the people in the camp were satisfied with eating the meat of horses and donkeys, and patiently endured snow and rain. When things, however, became unbearable, the soldiers folded their tents and moved off. Lotf Ali Khan could not but do the same, and in the month of Jomadi I of that year (1205/January, February, 1791), he returned to Shiraz."

In Shiraz, Lutf Ali Khan also sought no entry due to the hold of Aga Muhammad Khan. He fought next year with the Qajars, and defeated them in 1206/1792. In 1209/1794, Lutf Ali Khan captured Kirman. Aga Muhammad Khan besieged it for six months. It is said that Pir Mirza Muhammad Bakir had given a shelter to Lutf Ali Khan in a fort, who was seriously injured and sought mercy. Lutf Ali Khan finally managed to escape from Kirman, to which Aga Muhammad Khan, while entering Kirman, had accused the local people to have helped in escaping Lutf Ali Khan. By the vengeance he was wreaking on the inhabitants of Kirman, and issued orders to deprive all the adult males of their life, or of their eyesight; and the females and children, to the number of twenty thousand, were granted as slaves to the soldiers. G.R.G. Hambly writes in **Aqa**

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Mohammad Khan and the establishment of the Qajar Dynasty (JRAS, vol. L., January, 1963, p. 166) that, "Kerman was systematically ravaged for three months. Twenty thousand women and children were handed over to the army or sold as slaves. For the male population a different punishment was reserved and tradition relates that 7,000 eyes were brought to the conqueror, who personally counted them, informing the officer in charge of the operation: "Had one been missing, yours would have been taken!" As a memorial to the downfall of the Zand dynasty, a pyramid of skulls was erected in Bam on the spot where Lotf Ali Khan had been captured. Six hundred prisoners were executed in Kerman and their heads were carried to Bam by a further three hundred who were decapitated when they reached their destination. According to Henry Pottinger, this monument was still standing in 1810."

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Lutf Ali Khan was arrested when he was about 25 years old. His eyes were torn from the sockets and was executed in 1209/1794. With his death, the Zand dynasty had been declined in Iran, and Aga Muhammad Khan (1193-1212/1779-1797) founded the Qajarid empire.

In India, after the departure of Nadir, the Mughal empire in the time of Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) had become crippled. The constant expeditions of Ahmad Shah Abdali between 1161/1748 and 1181/1767 not only had broken down the backbone of the Mughal army, but also left the country economically collapsed. The next Mughal rulers on the throne of Delhi were Ahmed Shah (1748-1754) and Shah Alam II (1759-1806).

In India, it may be noted that Multan had been a centre of the Shamsi Ismailis of Kashmir and Punjab, where the descendants of Pir Shams had served as the *vakils* of the Imam. In Sind and Kutchh, the descendant of Pir Dadu also worked as the *vakils*. While, the Kadiwal Syeds were active in Kutchh and Sind, in which Syed Ghulam Ali Shah, or Syed Ghulmali Shah was most prominent. He initiated a bulk of the Hindus during the reign of Maharao Godmalji in Kutchh. Many other Indian *da'is* and *vakils* are reported to have lived in the period under our review, whose names are known only through their *ginans*, viz., Syed Fateh Ali Shah, Syed Miran Mahdi, Syed Miran Muhammad Shah, Syed Ladha Shah, Syed Kutabuddin, Syed Aal-i Imam, Syed Hussain etc.

The Mughal emperor Aurengzeb (d. 1707) is reported to have persecuted the Ismailis in Gujrat and Sind, and most among them had taken refuge in Iran. Some among them returned afterwards, but many other settled in Kirman and died there, whose graves still exist, giving dates in Khojki character. The grave of Aga Nihal, possibly a Kashmiri Ismaili, bears the date of 1722 and Kamadia Muhammad dates 1725. One unknown grave indicates the date of 1742. In Mahallat, the graves of Khoja Peeru and Kamadia Bhalu of Sind bear the date of 1705 and 1711 respectively.

It seems that Imam Abul Hasan Ali had moved to Shahr-i Babak in Kirman, most possibly in 1158/1745, situated about 180 kilometers southwest of the main city of Kirman. The decision seems to have been motivated for the security of the Indian pilgrims, since the Bakhtiyari tribesmen committed banditry on the roads, terrorizing the highways. Ahmad Ali Khan Viziri (d. 1295/1878) writes in **Tarikh-i Kirman** (Tehran, 1973, p. 542) that, "During the chaotic conditions of Iran after the downfall of the Safavids, the Indian Ismailis who regularly travelled to Anjudan and Mahallat regions for seeing their Imam and remitting to him their religious dues, were often plundered and killed between Nain and Yazd by the Bakhtiyari tribesmen."

The Imam thus, had to move to Shahr-i Babak, a location closer to the Iranian Gulf ports and the main pilgrimage route. He acquired extensive properties in Shahr-i Babak, also erected a winter residence in the city of Kirman, where his daughter, Fakhru'z-Zaman died in 1170/1756. He is also reported to have spent generously colossal money for the benefit of the people of Kirman, which enhanced his popularity. His fame in Kirman can be estimated from the fact that he was able to continue his governorship of Kirman when the Zand dynasty disintegrated upon Karim Khan's death in 1193/1779, and henceforth, the Imam ruled over Kirman independently.

Syed Fateh Ali Shah (d. 1212/1798), an Indian *vakil* had visited Shahr-i Babak to see the Imam, and made its brief description in his one extant *ginan* that: "The Lord resides in the western land

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as an Iranian. He speaks Persian in northern Iran (*sheter deep*). His residence is in Shahr-i Babak, and his name is Shah Abul Hasan Ali in elegant form."

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When Imam Abul Hasan Ali left for Shahr-i Babak in 1158/1745, he was succeeded as a governor of Kirman by his cousin, Mirza Sadik. In 1206/1792, Aga Muhammad Khan seized Shiraz and sent his nephew, Fateh Ali to conquer Kirman. Fateh Ali occupied Kirman, and replaced Mirza Sadik, and himself became the governor of the provinces of Fars, Kirman and Yazd.

When Aga Muhammad Khan massacred a large number of the local inhabitants in Kirman, the Ismailis were however spared in the operation. The Ismaili Syed families and the relatives of the Imam, living in Shahr-i Babak were allowed to repair to Kahek, where Aga Muhammad Khan gave them new pieces of land to compensate for what they left in Kirman city; and assigned them according to the rank emoluments (*wazifa*) and pay (*mostamarri*). Imam Abul Hasan Ali's first historical debut in the Iranian sources is recorded from the event of the capture of Kirman by Lutf Ali Khan in 1205/1791. His death is also recorded in the contemporary sources as 1206/1792 under the name of Syed Abul Hasan Ali Shah Mahallati Kaheki. He had however passed his whole life in Shahr-i Babak, but his death took place in Mahallat on May 23, 1792, and was interred in Najaf.

KHALILULLAH ALI II (1206-1233/1792-1817), 45TH IMAM

Imam Khalilullah Ali II was born in 1153/1740 in the city of Kirman. His upbringing in Mahallat began under the care of his uncle, Mirza Muhammad Bakir at the age of two years, and got rudiments of his formal education at home.

In 1157/1744, a daughter Bibi Marium Khatoon, was born at his uncle's home, known as Bibi Sarcar Mata Salamat, with whom the marriage of Imam Khalilullah Ali was solemnized, who gave birth of Hasan Ali Shah. She was a good orator and visited India about at the age of 85 years in 1245/1829 with Mirza Abul Kassim to remove the internal strifes of the community. She went to live at Kera in Kutchh in 1246/1830, where she breathed her last in 1248/1832. She had been interred in Najaf, but her memorial still exists in Kera. The second marriage of Imam Khalilullah Ali had been actualized in Yazd with the sister of Aga Imam Khan Farahani in 1231/1816.

Imam Khalilullah Ali ascended in 1206/1792, which he intimated in writing to his Indian followers. E.I. Howard had delivered his speech in the Bombay High Court in June, 1866, where he presented a few letters of Imam Khalilullah Ali, vide **The Shi'a School of Islam and its Branches** (Bombay, 1906, p. 85). In pursuant, on 23rd May, 1792, when assumed the Imamate, he wrote a letter, addressed to the community of Bhavnagar, stating that he had been so fortunate as to have assumed his seat on the throne of the Imamate, and directed them to remit the religious dues to him under the care of the *jamat* at Muscat. Another letter dated July, 1794 also addressed to the *jamats* of Sind, Kutchh, Surat, Bombay, Mahim, Bhavnagar etc.

Imam Khalilullah Ali also used to go out on regular hunting trips in the woods with his retainers and pages, preferably during the festive of Navroz and Eid al-Ghadir. He had many lands in Mahallat, Kahek and Shahr-i Babak, procuring large earnings. His followers from India, Iran, Syria, Afghanistan and Central Asia used to flock at Mahallat, whom he granted the title of *darwish*. Sometimes, he gave them the letters for the *jamat*. Some pilgrims are reported to have died in Iran, whose graves exist in Kahek. For instance, Kamadia Datardina Wandani of the dharkhana *jamat* died in 1217/1803 and a certain Rai Pareo Janguani died in 1224/1810. Imam Khalilullah Ali had acquired few pieces of land in Yazd for the Iranian Ismailis, and himself also moved to Yazd in 1230/1815.

Syed Karamali Shah was an Iranian Ismaili, who lived in Mahallat. He mostly remained in the company of Mirza Muhammad Bakir, who taught him the esoteric doctrines of Ismailism. Syed

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Karamali was sent to Badakhshan and Chitral, where he launched pervasive mission. He also went to Yasin, whose ruler was Raja Khushwaqt I (1640-1700), the founder of Khushwawaqt dynasty. Syed Karamali had devoted his life in the Ismaili mission and died in Yasin.

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Aga Muhammad Khan Qajar had founded the Qajarid dynasty in Iran and made Tehran as his capital in 1210/1796. He concluded a truce with the Russians, and accordingly, the Qajarid retained the occupation of Jurjan and Taghlas. In 1206/1792, Aga Muhammad Khan seized Shiraz and sent his nephew, Fateh Ali to conquer Kirman. Fateh Ali replaced Mirza Sadik, the cousin of Imam Abul Hasan Ali, and himself became the governor of the provinces of Fars, Kirman and Yazd.

Aga Muhammad Khan then turned to the Afsharids of Khorasan, and invaded Mashhad in 1210/1796 and defeated them. Meanwhile, the Russians once again attacked the northern region of Iran, therefore, Aga Muhammad Khan had to take field, where he was killed by his own two slaves in 1211/1797. He ruled over a great part of Iran for a period of 18 years and 10 months, and was succeeded by his nephew, Fateh Ali Shah, who was engaged in expelling his enemies at that time, such as Russia, Turkey, the Uzbeks and Afghans.

The most marked instance of the political involvement of the Shi'a *ulema* during this period was in the case of the first Perso-Russian War (1804-1813) in the Caucasus, which had been intermittent from about 1804, and resumed in 1811. Abbas Mirza, the son of Fateh Ali Shah was conducting the campaign, turned to the *ulema* of Iraq and Ispahan to issue *fatwa*, declaring the encounter against Russia as a *jihad*. Many of the prominent *ulema*, such as Shaikh Jafar Kashiful Gitta (d. 1227/1812) and Ahmad Naraqi (d. 1245/1829), responded to this appeal and stirred up hottest agitation. In 1812, the Iranian army defeated the Russians at Qarabagh. Russian forces were reinforced, crossed the Aras river, and defeated the Iranians at Aslanduz.

The first Perso-Russian War was consequently ended in defeat of Iran, and the Treaty of Gulistan in 1228/1813 stripped Iran of all the Caucasian provinces, such as Georgia, Darband, Baku, Shirwan, Shaki, Ganja, Qarabagh, Mughan and part of Talish. This war had considerably depleted the resources of Iran. A number of disorders broke out; and the Afghans also engineered a rebellion in Khorasan in 1813. There was also repeated chaotic condition on the Turkish frontier, but war did not break out until 1821. It however lasted until 1823 when it was concluded by the treaty of Erzurum.

The *ulema* class however continued to employ effectively the tactics of obstructionism in the Iranian politics, and emphatically agitated for another *jihad* against Russia. In 1825, the Russian governor-general of Georgia occupied Gokcheh, the principal disputed district with a military force. Fateh Ali Shah was reluctant but when in 1826 he set out for his summer residence in Sultaniyya, he was followed there by Aqa Syed Muhammad Tabataba, Ahmad Naraqi (d. 1245/1829), Muhammad Taqi Baraghani (d.1230/1847) and other prominent *ulema*, demanded that Fateh Ali Shah should declare war on Russia. They threatened to take control of the affairs of government in case of refusal. They issued *fatwa*, declaring the war to be obligatory and opposition to it a sign of unbelief (*kufr*).

The king was pressed into acquiescing, and the war broke out in 1826. Iran gained initial success, recovering most of the territories ceded by the treaty of Gulistan. The Russian forces were reinforced with latest weapons. The *ulema* imparted to the Iranian soldiers, who had inferior weapons, to recite Sura Yasin of the Koran in the battlefield, to cause their enemies blind. The Russians inflicted a series of severe defeats on the Iranian army. They advanced rapidly and Tabriz was first to be fallen, and various discontented leaders in Azerbaijan went over to the Russian side. The outcome of this second Perso-Russian War was as disastrous as the first. Negotiations for peace began in November, 1827, and a treaty was signed on February 21, 1828 at Turkomanchay. As the result of the Treaty of Turkomanchay, Erivan and Nakhchivan and a large indemnity were ceded by Iran. Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi writes in **Iran - Royalty, Religion and Revolution** (Canberra, 1980, p. 95) that, "Thus the war-mongering bureaucrates forced upon

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Iran a war with Russia which ended with the even more humiliating treaty of Turkomanchay in 1828."

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The state over which Fateh Ali reigned had much in common with the earliest kingdoms of the Seljuqs, the Ilkhanids, the Taymurids and the Safavids. After the Perso-Russian Wars, Fateh Ali lost large part of the Iranian territories.

Imam Khalilullah Ali resided in Mahallat. He came to live in Kahek after assumption of the Imamate in 1206/1792 where he stayed for about 23 years. The Ismailis of Syria, Iran and India flocked in Mahallat, and then in Kahek. His uncle Mirza Muhammad Bakir also lived in Mahallat.

Some contemporary European travellers have reported the whereabouts of Imam Khalilullah. L.J. Rousseau (1780-1831), a French Consul in Aleppo from 1809 to 1816, was the first person to draw the attention of the Europeans to the existence of the contemporary Ismailis and their living Imam. He writes in **Memoire sur les Ismaelis et les Nosairis de Syrie**, (Vol. XIV, 1811, Paris, pp. 279-80) that, "There were still many Ismailis in the country who owed allegiance to an Imam of the line of Ismail. His name was Shah Khalilullah, and he resided in a village called Kehk near Qumm, half-way between Tehran and Isfahan." Sir John Macdonnell Kinneir (1728-1830) about the year 1813 also described in his **Topographical History of Persia** that, "In the district of the Persian highlands especially near the ruins of Alamut, are still to be found a remnant of the Ismailis, who go by the name of Hooseinis ... the Ismailis of Persia recognize (Shah Khalilullah) as their chief and Imam, dwelling near Kehkt whose descent they deduce from Ismail, the son of Jaffir Sadick." The Scottish tourist, James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856), who in the course of his journey through Iran had seen the Ismailis. "Shah Khuleel Oollah", he writes in his **Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan** (London, 1825, p. 376), "was a person of high respectability and great influence, keeping an hundred gholaums of his own in pay; but he was put to death by the inhabitants of Yezd, in a riot...." Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838), an eminent orientalist of the 19th century in his **Memoir sur la dynastie des Assassins** (Paris, 1818, p. 84) quotes an excerpt of a letter of Rousseau's son wrote to him from Tehran on June 1, 1808. It reads: "The Ismailis even today have their Imam, or pontiff, descending, as they claim, from Jafar Sadiq, the chief of their sect, and residing at Kehek, a village in the districts of Qom. He is called Sheikh Khalil Allah...This person, whom his people grace with the pompous title of caliph, enjoys a great reputation and is considered to have the gift of performing miracles."

Syed Ghulam Ali Shah, or Ghulmali Shah from the Kadiwal family was a prominent missionary in Sind, Kutchh and Kathiawar. He had converted many Hindus. He composed few *ginans*, and died in Karachi in 1207/1792 and was buried in Kera in Kutchh. He was followed by Syed Muhammad Shah in Kutchh, who died in 1228/1813 and was buried in Bombay. He was the last *vakil* in India to be sent from Iran. He was not married, therefore, he was honoured the epithet of *dullah* (bridegroom).

Syed Fateh Ali Shah (1733-1798) was an eminent *da'i*, whose grave exists near Jiraq in Sind. His pen-name was Shamsi, also known as Syed Shamsi. He was hailed from Kadiwal family. Imam Abul Hasan Ali had given him mantle of *vakil* for India. He seems to have visited Iran for two times, and lastly in 1210/1795 during the time of Imam Khalilullah Ali, where he stayed about eight months. He arrived in Mahallat on the day of Navroz and his mind became forlorn when he learnt that the Imam had gone on a hunting expedition in the woods to the north of Mahallat. He relates his quest for the Imam which ultimately led to his meeting. His two *ginans* are accessible, wherein he makes mention of the Imam that:- "Shah Khalilullah enjoys his stay in the fort of Mahallat, and mercifully summoned Syed Fateh Ali, and accomplished his immense desires, where Mawla Ali appeared in an absolute glory."

In 1230/1815, Imam Khalilullah Ali moved to Yazd. On moving to Yazd, he left behind his wife and children in Kahek to live on the proceeds from the lands in the Mahallat. In 1231/1816, Imam Khalilullah Ali betrothed to the sister of Aga Imam Khan Farahani. Imam Khalilullah Ali also tied his close relation with Haji Zaman Khan, the governor of Yazd. The Ismaili pilgrims henceforward began to trek in Yazd to behold their Imam.

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In 1233/1817, a dispute took place between the Ismailis and the local shopkeeper at the main market, and the latter violently lodged complaint to Nawab Mirza Syed Jafar, the chief of Yazd, who summoned the Ismailis for punishment. These handful Ismailis had taken shelter in Imam's residence. In pursuit, Nawab Mirza demanded to arrest them, but Imam refused, saying, "They have sought asylum at my residence, therefore I cannot remove them from my protection."

Mulla Hussain Yazdi was a fanatical Shi'a in Yazd. His friends had created chaotic conditions in Tehran. They had made a mosque in Tehran as a centre of their evil activities. Their objective was to harass the innocent citizens, and relieved through bribes, had they arrested. It seems that Fateh Ali Shah was in need of funds through different means, therefore, he had given liberty to these elements. Many eminent persons had become the victims of the gang of Hussain Yazdi and the event of Yazd also reflects a part of his derogatory activities.

Hussain Yazdi instigated the people and stormed the Imam's residence with a terrorist gang, who pelted stones heavily and broke down its walls. They managed to enter the residence and fought with Imam's handful followers and servants. In the collision, Imam Khalilullah Ali was wounded, resulting his immediate death. The terrorists also gutted the house and took flight.

The news of the death of the Ismaili Imam rapidly spread all over the country within couple of days. In reprisal, the Ismailis took arms and the country was likely being blanketed with the darkest hour, but the emperor Fateh Ali Shah turned the tide. He at once ordered Haji Zaman Khan, the governor of Yazd to arrest Hussain Yazdi and his partisans. The governor soon afterwards arrested them while they were about to flee from the city, and sent them chained in Tehran. Hussain Yazdi was whipped and his friends were imprisoned, who relieved themselves through bribes after restoration of peace.

Imam Khalilullah Ali's body had been taken to Mahallat under the protection of the Qajarid soldiers. His bier was soon taken to Najaf for interment. He had four sons, viz. Hasan Ali Shah, Taki Khan, Sardar Abul Hasan Khan and Sardar Muhammad Bakir Khan; and two daughters, viz. Shah Bibi and Gohar Taj.

With the death of Imam Khalilullah Ali II in 1233/1817, the *taqiya* practice in the Iranian Ismailis being in force for over five hundred years came to an end, and they came up as a leading Shi'ite branch of Islam in Iran.

HASAN ALI SHAH, AGA KHAN I (1233-1298/1817-1881), 46TH IMAM

Imam Hasan Ali Shah, known as Muhammad Hussain al-Hussaini Mahallati was born in Mahallat in 1219/1804, and assumed the Imamate at the age of 13 years in 1233/1817. His most renowned title was Aga Khan. His name was documented with Bombay Government as **His Highness Aga Khan Mahallati**. His name however in the Bill of 1830 was written as **Pirzada** i.e., the son of a saint.

His mother Bibi Sarcar Mata Salamat was the daughter of Pir Mirza Muhammad Bakir. On moving to Yazd, Imam Khalilullah Ali had left his wife and children at Mahallat to live on the proceeds of the family holdings in Mahallat and Kahek. When she found herself insecure in Mahallat, she had gone to Qumm with her son and made necessary arrangement for his elementary schooling, where his tutor was Ali Muhammad Qummi.

The governors of Mahallat and Qumm were inimical to the family of Imam Khalilullah Ali because of the regular thronging of the Indian pilgrims at his residence. According to **Ibrat-i Afza**, an autobiography of Imam Hasan Ali Shah, "The fortunes of the family were at low ebb when Imam Shah Khalilullah was killed in Yazd." Hence, Bibi Sarcar Mata Salamat came to the court at

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Tehran with his son to seek justice. Her pleadings were immediately successful. Shah Fateh Ali ordered his governor of Yazd, Haji Muhammad Zaman Khan to arrest Hussain Yazdi and his gang. Not content with this retribution, he also invited Imam Hasan Ali Shah at his palace and gave him due honour. Ahmad Mirza Adud'ud Dawla writes in **Tarikh-i Adudi** (Tehran, 1908, p. 69) that, "Finally, as conclusive sign of honour, Fateh Ali Shah gave one of his daughters, Sarv-i Jahan Khanum, in marriage to Imam Hasan Ali Shah, allotting 23,000 *tumans* of wedding expenses." The Imam was also invested the honorific title of **Aga Khan** in 1234/1818, including the governorship of Mahallat and Qumm.

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Imam Hasan Ali Shah led a peaceful life in Mahallat, and enjoyed honour at the Qajarid court until the death of Shah Fateh Ali on 19th Jamada I, 1250/October 23, 1834. Shah Fateh Ali was succeeded by his grandson, Muhammad Shah (1250-1264/1834-1848). The Imam attended the coronation of Muhammad Shah in Tehran on January 31, 1835, where he happened to see Major Henry Rawlinson (1810-1895), vide George Rawlinson's **Memoir of Sir Henry C. Rawlinson** (London, 1892, p. 52). The new king Muhammad Shah had consulted with his chief minister, Farahani (d. 1251/1835) and appointed the Imam as the governor of Kirman in 1251/1835.

The province of Kirman was then in the hands of the rebellious sons of Shuja al-Saltana, a pretender to the throne, and it was also regularly raided by the Afghans and Baluchis. The Imam diplomatically restored order in Kirman with his own resources. Both Bam and Narmashir held for a long time by the rebellions were also taken back. The Imam sent report of his victories to Tehran, but he obtained no appreciative words due to the rumours that he was extending his influence in southern Iran. The Imam had paid half the expenses incurred in the campaign upon the words of the Prime Minister, Mirza Aqasi that he might recoup himself from the revenues of that province, but the Imam did not touch the revenues and made his claim in the above report. Despite his valuable services, his governorship was short-lived in Kirman.

In 1252/1837, about twenty months after his arrival in Kirman, the Imam was replaced by another governor, Firuz Mirza Nusrat ad-Dawla, and was recalled to Tehran. Trusting on the rumours, Muhammad Shah also took field against the Imam in command of Suhrab Khan. Instead of making an investigation, the king's militant stance had been a surprise to the Imam. It induced the Imam to take arms for defensive purpose. The fortress of Bam near Kirman was then in the hands of the king's artillery men, who had betrayed their chief. The Imam was capable to occupy this fort without difficulty in September, 1937. He refused to withdraw with his forces from the citadel of Bam until the principal cause of the court intrigues followed by his dismissal was not shown to him. The Iranian empire turned a deaf ear to him. Rather, his defensive actions were branded a rebellion. Obviously, the accusations were utterly exaggerated. The Iranian chronicler, Rida Quli Khan Hidayat, for instance in **Raudat-us-Safa'i Nasiri** (Tehran, 1922, 10:260) has lebelled the actions of the Imam as an act of revolt. An important analyst of the fact will be able to judge how much truth there was in the biographical work, **Ibrat-i Afza** (Tehran, 1946, p. 20) of the Imam, in which he disclaimed any desire for temporal power and said: "Through the grace of God and the blessing of my immaculate forefathers and ancestors, I am able, from the wide and lofty expanse of darwishhood, to disdain and despise all monarchy." Thus, the Imam was driven to desperate straits and had to take up arms in self-defence. He had however a large and substantial following in Iran. Had he chosen, he could have mustered a big army to shake the Qajarid throne, but he was loath to fight with the king for whom he had a regard.

The Imam's dismissal from the governorship of Kirman is also occasioned by the rivalries for the headship of the Nimatullahi order in Iran. It is said that Muhammad Jafar, known as Majdhub Ali Shah (d. 1239/1823) was succeeded by Zain al-Abidin Shirwani, known as Mast Ali Shah (1196-1253/1782-1837). Once the Imam, during Fateh Ali Shah's rule had given refuge to Mast Ali Shah in the village of Daulatabad, near Mahallat, who had escaped the violent persecution of the Shi'a *ulema* of Fars. During the coronation of Muhammad Shah, Mast Ali Shah, who had been enjoying the Imam's hospitality at Mahallat, accompanied a certain Ismaili friend to Tehran. Muhammad Shah too, had certain Sufic loyalties, and joined the Nimatullahi order before his coronation. Soon afterwards, Mast Ali Shah came to know Haji Mirza Aqasi, the prime minister, as his powerful rival, who as Nimatullahi aspired to the leadership of the order. It resulted Mast Ali Shah to incur

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the disfavour of the king, and was driven from the court. Since the Imam had continued to support his friend, Mast Ali Shah, he arose the enmity of Mirza Aqasi, who intrigued against him and caused his removal from the governorship of Kirman.

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It is also said that a certain Abdul Muhammad Mahallati had demanded one of the daughters of the Imam in marriage to his son, which was declined. Thus, Abdul Muhammad Mahallati, initially in the service of the Imam, rose to a high position in the service of Mirza Aqasi in Tehran, aroused him against the Imam. Mirza Aqasi, the prime minister was responsible to have stirred up Muhammad Shah, the Qajarid king against the Imam. E.G. Browne in his **A Literary History of Persia** (London, 1930, 4:147-9) also admits the bone of contention between the Imam and the Iranian king due to the arrogant behaviour instigated by Mirza Aqasi, who being an old tutor of the king wielded more influence over him.

In the meantime, Rida Quli, the grandson of Fateh Ali Shah, had taken refuge with the British in Baghdad, reported alleged details of news to Palmerston through the British resident Col. Taylor, claiming that the Imam had formed an alliance and mutual league with the people of Sistan and the army of Baluchis. This further boosted the rumours of the rebellion of the Imam.

In a letter to Viscount Falkland (1803-1884), the governor of Bombay, the Imam had also disclosed on April 18, 1851 that, "The cause of my having been blamed before was the hot disposition of Haji Mirza Aqasi who had obliged me to leave the Persian court."

It is an undeniable fact that Iran was a thick arena of the bigoted Shi'ite *ulema*, where an Ismaili Imam hardly rule the country in peace, and as such, the notion that the Imam had revolted for capturing the Qajarid throne seems absolutely irrational.

The animosity of the Qajarids became more and more virulent, therefore, the Imam at once recalled his brother Sardar Abul Hasan Khan from Baluchistan, where he was conducting military campaigns, and his another brother Muhammad Bakir Khan from Rawar. He prepared to resist the royal forces. He was besieged 14 months at Bam, a town in the province of Kirman, about 120 miles south-east of the city of Kirman on the western edge of the great salt desert, Dasht-i Lut. Thus, the Imam was detained to house-arrest in Kirman, and during which time, he continued to see his followers of Badakhshan, Khorasan and India.

Meanwhile, Muhammad Shah returned from his unsuccessful campaign against Herat in 1254/1838, therefore, the Imam was allowed to proceed to Tehran towards the end of 1254/1838. He presented his case before the king with innumerable evidences of his loyalty. T. MacKenzie, the British envoy, however, reported from Kharrak to the Secret Committee that, "The Aga Khan was induced to surrender himself under solemn promises which were shamefully violated by the Persian government, and instead of being restored to his government, he was kept a prisoner at Tehran at the king's camp." Finally, the Imam was made free provided he retired peacefully to his family lands at Mahallat.

Assured of his safety, the Imam however found that he was being socially ostracized by the orders of his implacable enemy, Mirza Aqasi, and had to fight even for food. This fresh provocation embittered the situation. In the meantime, once again the cloud of rumours began to thicken in Tehran that the Imam had built a palace with a huge army to extend his influence in southern Iran. It was exaggerated and ultimately took the shape of a report that the Imam intended to rebel against the Qajarids. The Imam led a tranquil life at Mahallat for about 2 years following his dismissal from the governorship. Early in 1256/1840, Muhammad Shah himself went to Dalijan near Mahallat on the pretence of recreation, to verify the truth of the rumours. At that time the Imam was out of Mahallat for hunting. He however, sent his messenger to Mirza Aqasi, requesting for royal permission to proceed to Mecca for pilgrimage. Permission was granted and a first batch of the Imam's family including his mother and son were sent to Iraq. He himself then moved from Mahallat for ever in Rajab, 1256/September, 1840 with his brothers, nephews, and a number of relatives, dependents and followers.

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The Imam reached Yazd after leaving Mahallat. It is reported in Riach's diary of September 25, 1840 that, "Bakhsh Ali Khan from Shiraz came to siege the Aga Khan, but he was defeated by the followers of the Aga Khan. Muhammad Shah, the king who was at that time in Ispahan, also sent two messengers to arrest the Aga Khan. The Aga Khan ordered both hands of one of them to be cut off which was done, the other by entreating mercy was not injured." When the Imam was on the borders of Kirman and Yazd, Bahman Mirza Baha ad-Dawla, the governor of Yazd, and the brother of the king, attacked with the royal force on Imam's caravan, but was defeated in his incursion. Robert Grant Watson writes in **History of Persia** (London, 1866, p. 333) that, Bahman Mirza had divided his force into three parts and thus gave an opportunity to the Imam to defeat each detachment in detail. Among the first troops of Bahman Mirza, there were many who secretly held the tenets of Ismailis, the rest was that in the action, which ensued, they went over in a body to Imam, and their leader Isfendiar, was killed.

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By the end of 1840, the southern Iran had become a bed of hatching rebellions. It was however rumoured that an Iranian prince Suleman Mirza, residing at Baghdad, had arrived in Kirman to assist the Imam. Even Ali Shah, the king's uncle, who was spreading his influence in the mountains of Fars, was also in contact of the Imam. Muhammad Taki Khan, the chief of the Bakhtiyari tribe, and the governor of Khuzistan, also generated close ties with the Imam with a view to help him against the Iranian empire. Meanwhile, Muhammad Shah failed to get his revenue in advance from Muhammad Taki Khan, and accused him of having supplied the Imam with his means and resources; therefore, Ali Naqi Khan replaced him to the governorship. A.H. Layard, on the other hand writes in **Early Adventures** (London, 1887, p. 322) that, when he was in the mountains, he received news that the British government also supported the Aga Khan. There is no foundation to believe that the Imam had ever acquired aids from the rebellions of the southern Iran, or the British authority to engineer rebellion against the Iranian empire. In December 31, 1841 after resuming his office in Tehran, the British agent McNeill had written to Aberdeen that, "It may be almost unnecessary for me to add that the charges brought against the British government or its agents, of having secretly aided the Aga Khan, are without foundation, and the Persian government must have been deceived by its informants."

In 1257/1841, the Imam defeated the royal forces of 4000 at the command of Isfandiyar Khan, the brother of Fazal Ali Khan near Dashtab. In the interim, Fazal Ali Khan had collected a force of 24000 to compel the Imam to flee from Bam to Rigan on the border of Baluchistan and followed the Imam close upon his heels like a shadow, and blockaded the way to the Bunder Abbas. The Imam found himself between the horns of a dilemma and decided to move to southern Khorasan to Afghanistan. Starting at Rawar, he transversed the arid Dasht-i Lut to Qain. In June, 1841 Muhammad Shah sent Abdullah Khan, the commander of his artillery from Tehran with orders to burn and demolish the towns and villages that were suspected of assisting the Imam. He also sent Khan Ali Khan, the governor of Lar against the campaign. In the meantime, Habibullah Khan, the governor of Yazd also came out to fight with the Imam, with eight guns and a body of troops. Thus, his enemies embosomed the Imam on all sides. In a battle with Khan Ali Khan, he was repulsed, and had to fly to the mountains of Baluchistan. During the night, however, the Imam returned the mountain with reinforcements and surprised the troops of Khan Ali Khan in ambushing upon them at full gallop and turned them back.

Accompanied by his brothers and many soldiers and servants, the Imam proceeded eastward, and after having adventured on a long perilous journey through central Iran, he crossed the borders, and arrived at Lash in Afghanistan in 1257/1841, marking an end of the longer Iranian period of Ismaili Imamate. After facing heavy odds and finding himself out-numbered, the Imam forced his way through the king's army and reached Afghanistan. Naoroji M. Dumasia writes in **The Aga Khan and his Ancestors** (Bombay, 1939, pp. 27-28) that, "His exile from Persia was a loss to that country, but Persia's loss was the gain of the British Empire, and his comradeship in arms with the British army cemented the ties of friendship.....The part which the Aga Khan played as an ally of the British in that disastrous war was in every way worthy of the heroic deeds of the great martyrs of Islam whose blood flowed in his veins."

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About the time that the Imam was having troubles in Iran, the British were deeply involved in Afghanistan, and their efforts were aimed at establishing in Kabul a rule that would be friendly to Britain, and prevent the Russian influence penetrating the borders of India, that would possibly threaten the existence of British empire. The First Anglo-Afghan War, or First Afghan War (1255/1838 to 1258/1842), which is called for heavy sacrifices and untold hardship and suffering, was undertaken partly to counter the Russian advance in Central Asia and partly to place on the throne at Kabul the dethroned ruler, Shah Shuja, in place of Dost Muhammad (1791-1863). Thus, the British occupied Afghanistan on August 7, 1839, and placed Shah Shuja (1780-1842), the *amir* of Sadozai tribe on the throne of Kabul and Kandhar. Sir William MacNaghten (1839-1891) was designated as the British envoy at the court of Shah Shuja.

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Inside Afghanistan, the Imam began to trek from Girishk to Kandhar. On August 6, 1841 the intelligence from Girishk reached Rawlinson, reporting the arrival of the Imam and his horsemen. Rawlinson in turn informed to MacNaghten of the Imam's influence and of his importance as an Iranian refugee in Afghanistan. Henceforward, a close relation developed between the Imam and the British. From Girishk, the Imam reported his arrival to Muhammad Taymur, the Birtish appointed governor of Kandhar, and also to Major Henry Rawlinson. The Imam stayed on as a guest of Muhammad Taymur at Kandhar.

The internal revolts in Kandhar were put down by October, 1841 by Nott, in which Akram Khan, the chief of Durrani tribe was executed, resulting a disaffection among the other tribes, and a very serious outbreak took place at Kabul too in November, which gradually spread to Kandhar. The British position became critical and in the ensuing struggle, the Imam as the ally of the British, was necessarily involved. Rawlinson also made use of the Imam's influence among the Shi'ite group, to bring about the success.

In November, 1841, the eastern Gilzays broke into revolt near Kabul in protest against the reduction of their allowances, and occupied the passes on the road to Jalalabad, plundered and cut off the communications of Kabul, and the condition of the British at Kabul became very critical.

The insurrection spread slowly towards Kandhar. To put down the rising, William Nott (1782-1845) on January 12, 1842 fought with the rebels and defeated them. The Imam also joined Nott and Rawlinson in the skirmish of Killashek with his horsemen. One of the Imam's men was killed and few others were wounded. Rawlinson, in his report mentioned regarding the event of January 12, that, "On this occasion, Agha Khan, having volunteered the services of his hundred men, was present and was engaged in skirmishing with the enemy."

After two months, the rebel group near Kandhar, prepared for a big incursion under the direction of Mirza Ahmad. The British were in a difficult state. On March 7, 1842, Nott resolved to give a severe blow to the rebels. On this occasion, Rawlinson in consultation with Nott formed a Parsiwan troop, with the horsemen of the Imam and other Shi'a chiefs, Nabi Khan and Mirza Ibrahim and placed altogether 300 cavalry under the command of the Imam. Nott with his forces marched out of Kandhar in pursuit of the enemy and some small skirmishes took place on March 9. On the following day, Nott continued his onwards marching. Rawlinson in his report, dating December 20, 1842 to Governor General, also mentioned that the services at that time of the Imam were such consequence, "that the general thought him deserving of special notice in the report that was forwarded to the government on the occasion." As the year 1258/1842 progressed, the state of Afghanistan still remained more critical. In July, Kandhar and Jalalabad were still under the British advanced posts, and the intervening valleys and defiles were in the hands of the Afghans.

Meanwhile, Lord Ellenborough (1841-1844), the Governor-General had arrived in India in succession to Auckland and he decided that the British troops should evacuate Afghanistan. In July, 1842 the Imam too learned the evacuation programme of the British. Nott with his troops retreated via Ghazna, Kabul and Jalalabad, and the remaining troops were to return to India via Quetta and Sukkur. The charge of Kandhar was left in the hands of Safdar Beg.

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After the departure of the British forces from Kandhar on August 9, 1842 for Quetta, the Imam stayed on in Kandhar for about six weeks with Sardar Sherdil Khan. Rawlinson who sympathized with him, had advised him to retreat to India. Hence, the Imam reached Quetta on October 5, 1842 and then went to stay with the Khan of Kalat, Mir Shahnawaz Khan for more than a month. Before he left, he had been given a letter of recommendation to Sir Charles Napier (1782-1853) by MacNaghten. By the end of November, the Imam reached Sukkur and met Sir Charles Napier, who had been commissioned a general officer to the supreme civil, political and military control of both upper and lower Sind. In January, 1843, the Imam went with Napier to the British camp at Bhiria and then to Hyderabad with his sixty horsemen. In Hyderabad, he was employed in the British service during the battles of Miami and Dubba.

Sind had a population of little over a million in the time of the Mirs. During the Anglo-Afghan War, the Mirs of upper and lower Sind had allowed the British forces to pass through their territories. In 1840, James Outram was appointed as the British political agent to the Mirs of lower Sind in place of Henry Pottinger. Outram was also made political agent of upper Sind in place of Ross Bell in 1841. Sir Charles Napier held many meetings in December, 1842 and January, 1843 with the Mirs for the negotiations. However, on January 11, 1843, Napier stormed the deserted fortress of Imamgarh. The Baluchi tribes of one of the Mirs were embittered and on February 14, 1843, attacked the British residency in Hyderabad. On February 17, Napier marched with his forces on Hyderabad and defeated the Mirs of Hyderabad, Khairpur and Mirpur in the battle of Miami. The Mirs of upper and lower Sind surrendered except Mir Sher Muhammad of Mirpur. On March 26, 1843, at the battle of Dubba, Napier defeated Sher Muhammad, and the annexation of Sind to the British territories was formally announced on August, 1843. In Sind, the Imam placed his cavalry at the disposal of the British, and tried to convince Nasir Khan, the then Talpur *amir* of Kalat, to cede Karachi to the British. Nasir Khan refused to cooperate, the Imam disclosed his battle plan to James Outram. As a result, the British camp was saved from a night attack. For his valuable services, the Imam was granted an annual pension from Charles Napier with a title of **His Highness**.

After the conquest of Sind in 1259/1843, the British attempted to subjugate neighbouring Baluchistan, in which the Imam again helped them militarily and diplomatically. From Jerruk, where the Imam was staying after February, 1843, he contacted the various Baluchi chieftains, advising them to submit to the British rule. He also sent his brother Muhammad Bakir Khan together with a number of his horsemen to help the British against Mir Sher Khan, the Baluchi *amir*. Soon afterwards, the Imam was given a post in Jerruk to secure the communications between Karachi and Hyderabad. Charles Napier writes in his diary on February 29, 1843 that, "I have sent the Persian Prince Agha Khan to Jherruk, on the right bank of the Indus. His influence is great, and he will with his own followers secure our communication with Karachi. He is the lineal chief of Ismailians, who still exist as a sect and are spread all over the interior of Asia."

On March 23, 1843, the Imam and his horsemen were attacked by the Jam and Jokia Baluchis, who killed his many followers and plundered 23 lacs of rupees worth of Imam's property. Napier, in April and May, 1843, sent warnings to the Jam and Jokia Baluchis, asking to return the plunder and surrender. In May, 1843, Napier ordered his commander at Karachi to attack and recover the property of the Imam, which was done.

Meanwhile, the Imam left Jerruk, and proceeded to Kutchh via the port of Karachi on Ramzan, 1260/October, 1844, which was his first marine trip. Maharao Shri Deshalji, the ruler of Kutchh feted him with due consideration at Mandvi, and took him to Bhuj and gave him a state bungalow for his stay. The Imam then moved to Kathiawar, where Jam Saheb Shri Ranmalji received him in Jamnagar. For a year, thereafter, he traveled through Kathiawar and came to Bombay via Surat and Daman on December 16, 1845 and was well received with the cordial homage of the whole Ismaili population of the city and its neighbourhood.

Soon after his arrival in Bombay, the Iranian government demanded Imam's extradition from India, citing the Anglo-Persian Treaty negotiated between Iran and India on November 25, 1814.

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The British India was placed on the horns of a dilemma. It could not, on the one hand, risk a breach of the friendly relation established with Iran, and on the other, surrender to his enemies one who regardless of personal losses and risk of life, had stood by the British as a faithful ally in their greatest hour of trial. At length, however, through the intervention of the British envoy, it was agreed that the Imam should be allowed to remain in India provided he stayed at Calcutta from where he could not be a menace to the Iranian government as from Sind.

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Thus, the Imam was reluctant to go to Calcutta on April 19, 1847 with his 52 followers. Sir Orfeur Cavenagh (1821-1891) had arranged for a house at Dumdum in Calcutta under the care of Bengal Presidency. He had to stay in Calcutta for 18 months until the death of Muhammad Shah in 1264/1848. He learnt of this after one month, and immediately approached Maddock, that he should be furnished facility to return to Bombay. On December 6, 1848, the Indian Government agreed to send the Imam to Bombay. He quitted Calcutta on December 8, 1848 with his wife and a suite of 40 retainers, in the Peninsular and Oriental Steamer, Lady Mary Wood, which sailed from Calcutta and reached Bombay on December 26, 1848. On September, 1850, the deputy Secretary in the Iranian Department of Bombay personally asked the Imam, who stated that he was willing to stay in Bombay. The members of the India Board also approved it on January 22, 1851.

In India, the Imam retained his close relation with the British empire. On a rare occasion, the Aga Hall was visited by the Duke of Edinburgh, the future king Edward VII (1901-1910), as Prince of Wales, during a state visit to India. The Prince of Wales inspected the Imam's cups won on the Indian turf and his son's trophies of the Indian chase, and talked over some of the events of a life as varied and adventurous as that of the Imam's ancestor. It was an honour, which, with the exception of the leading ruling princes, was accorded to no other nobleman and was acknowledged of his princely birth and the admirable services he had rendered to the British government.

Imam Hasan Ali Shah spent his final years peacefully in Bombay, with seasonal stay in Poona, and sometime in Banglore. While on visits to Banglore, he had formed a friendship with the then ruler of Travancore, and subsequently represented that important state in Bombay. He used to visit the Indian communities all over India. He invariably attended the Jamatkhana every morning at Bombay and lectured on the moral and religious precepts they should follow. He used to recite some passages of the Koran and then explain them in Persian. Next to him would stand Varas Ghulu, who knew Persian and translated the Imam's words into Sindhi.

Apart from his three wives, four sons and six daughters, the Imam also looked after a thousand or more relatives and retainers who had come with him from Iran. His elder son was Aga Ali Shah succeeded him. The second son was Aga Jhangi Shah (d. 1314/1896), whose sons were Zayn al-Abidin Shah, Shamsuddin Shah and Shah Abbas; and Haji Bibi and Shahzadi Begum were his daughters. The third son of the Imam was Aga Jalal Shah (d.1288/1871), who had two sons, viz. Muchul Shah and Kuchuk Shah, and two daughters, Shah Bibi and Malek Taj Begum. Akbar Shah (d. 1322/1905) was the fourth son, whose two sons were Shah Rukh Shah and Furukh Shah.

Imam Hasan Ali Shah died on Tuesday, April 12, 1881 at 9.45 p.m. His son and successor, Aga Ali Shah was in Karachi at that time, who was informed by urgent telegram. In the meantime, the body of Imam Hasan Ali Shah was shifted to the Darkhana Jamatkhana of Bombay on April 13, 1881 at 10.00 a.m. On Sunday, June 5, 1881 the Ismaili leaders held a meeting to decide where to bury the body. Sharif Gangji made an impressive speech in the meeting. Mukhi Ladak Haji offered the plot on the north of Hasanabad, measuring 16000 square yards alongwith a cash of Rs. 5000/- Kamadia Bandali gave Rs. 5000/- and thus, Rs. 25,000/- had been generated in the meeting from different individuals. The Ismailis of Zanzibar and Karachi also remitted huge funds. In sum, with the consent of the leaders and Imam Aga Ali Shah, it was decided to inter the body in Hasanabad, where a splendid mausoleum was erected.

The body of Imam Hasan Ali Shah buried on July 1, 1881. The Ismailis had closed their business and transactions. A grand gathering of over 6000 people assembled at Dharkhana Jamatkhana's

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premises, including the ambassadors of Turkey and Persia, the leaders of Europe, Parsis, Muslims and Hindus. The coffin was transferred to Hasanabad at 2.00 p.m. when it was raining. The body was buried at 4.00 p.m. A mausoleum alike Taj Mahal was constructed at the cost of three lacs rupees. The Ismaili men and women had worked very hard in its construction, otherwise its cost had exceeded more than it. Rahim Zain al-Abidin had donated its silver doors. Ababhai Narsi donated its golden *zumar*, and Mukhi Pirbhai Rahim gave *zumar* for its two minarets, the height of each is 90 feet.

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AGA ALI SHAH, AGA KHAN II (1298-1302/1881-1885), 47TH IMAM

Imam Aga Ali Shah, His Highness Aga Khan II was born in 1246/1830 at Mahallat, where he spent the first decade of his age. In the outset of 1256/1840, Imam Aga Ali Shah had been taken to Iraq, where he stayed a few years with his mother. Under the instruction of Iranian and Arab teachers, eminent for their piety and learning, he had been taught the oriental languages, and he achieved a reputation as an authority on Persian and Arabic literature, as a student of metaphysics and as an exponent of religious philosophy. He mostly spent his time at Baghdad and Karbala in hunting expeditions with the Iranian princes, notably in company with Zill al-Sultan, the eldest son of Shah Fateh Ali, who ruled for forty days in Iran.

During the late 1256/1840, the Qajarid regime allowed Imam Aga Ali Shah to take up temporary residence in Iran. His first marriage actualized with Marium Sultana in Iraq. From Karbala they had gone to Baghdad where they had a friendly meeting with Major Henry Rawlinson (1810-1895), the then British political agent in Turkish Arabia. He decided to take the family of Imam Hasan Ali Shah under his protection. Imam Aga Ali Shah and his mother Sarv-i Jahan Khanum (d. 1299/1882) and his wife Marium Sultana, reached Bombay in 1268/1852.

On succeeding to the Imamate in 1298/1881, Imam Aga Ali Shah maintained friendly relation with the British India that had been cemented by his father. He was granted the title of **His Highness** by the British government, which was officially informed to him by the then governor of Bombay on August 9, 1882.

The Qajarid king of Iran, Nasiruddin Shah (d. 1313/1896) had sent a message of condolence and sympathy to the Imam on the occasion of his father's death. Later, a robe of honour and the emblem of Iranian crown studded with diamonds were sent to the Imam as a sign of his relationship.

He was appointed to the Bombay Imperial Legislative Council from 1880 to 1885, when Sir James Fergusson (1808-1886) was the governor of Bombay. According to Naoroji M. Dumasia in **The Aga Khan and his Ancestors** (Bombay, 1939, p. 61), "The nomination to the Council in those days was a rare distinction bestowed only on men of outstanding ability and high social position." He discharged his responsibilities and onerous duties in a manner, which drew admiration of all. He was also the President of Mohammadan National Association at Bombay, and an honorary patron of the Western India Turf Club.

He was well concerned about the welfare of the Ismailis in India and spared no pains in raising the social status of his followers. Destitute members of the community received generous help from time to time at his hands. He also opened The Khoja Ismaili School at Bombay and elsewhere in 1882. It was perhaps a veritable beginning of a renaissance in Indian Ismaili community, whose tradition is continued till now in the world. He promoted educational and philanthropic institutions for the Indian Muslims with the cooperation of a certain Rahimtullah Muhammad Sayani, a most enlightened member of the community.

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The Imam also generated his close contact with the Ismaili communities in Upper Oxus districts, Badakhshan, Samarkand, Burma and East Africa. The growing prosperity of the Ismailis and his own towering position, earned his prestige among the Muslim population of India.

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The Imam used to visit interior Sind, notably in district Thatta. He liked the climate of Karachi, where he lived in Honeymoon Lodge. After his marriage with Lady Aly Shah in 1867, the Imam moved to Karachi most probably in 1871-72, where his son and successor was born in 1877. He also built a palace in Karachi at garden zone, known as *pir'ji wadi* (the fertile tract of the pir), which was converted to Aga Khan Gymkhana in 1940. The palace faced the park, then known as Government Garden, and later it came to be known as Gandhi Garden. He sought permission from Heavy Napier Bruce Erskine, the Commissioner in Sind (1879 to 1887) to build a gate of the park in 1882. The Imam bore its cost, where an existing plate indicates the donation of the space for the gate.

Like his father, the Imam was closely associated with the Nimatullahi Sufi order. Before going to India, he had generated close ties with Rahmat Ali Shah, the head of the Nimatullahis, who had been the guest of Imam Hasan Ali Shah in Mahallat in 1249/1833. Subsequently, the Imam maintained his relation with Rehmat Ali Shah (d. 1278/1861). He also tied relations with Munawwar Ali Shah (d. 1301/1884), the uncle and the successor of Rehmat Ali Shah. The Imam also entertained several notable Iranian Nimatullahis in Bombay, including Rehmat Ali's son, Muhammad Masum Shirazi, Naib al-Sadr (d. 1344/1926), the author of the **Tara'iq al-Haqa'iq**, who visited Bombay in 1298/1881 and stayed with the Imam for one year. Safi Ali Shah (d. 1316/1898), an eminent Nimatullahi also enjoyed the hospitality in 1280/1863.

The Imam wedded with Marium Sultana in Iraq, who died at Bombay after leaving behind two sons, Shihabuddin Shah (1268-1301/1851-1884) and Aga Nur Shah (1272-1301/1855-1884). These two sons had been brought up in Hasanabad at Bombay. Aga Nur Shah, aged 30 years, was a good sportsman. He once fell down from his horse while riding, and sustained serious injuries, which proved fatal, and his death took place three months before the death of his elder brother. The Imam appointed his elder son, Shihabuddin Shah as a *pir* on 1299/1882, who died at the age of 33 years on December 15, 1884.

The Imam's second wife belonged to a Shirazi family, and after her death, the third marriage was solemnized with Shamsul Mulk Lady Aly Shah.

The Imam was a skillful rider and great sportsman. He was very fond of hunting, but never made use of shelters in the hunting field for big game. Standing exposed to danger he took a sure and steady aim at wild animals. In this way he had bagged no less than forty tigers.

He died on Wednesday, August 17, 1885 of pneumonia contracted in a day's hunting near Poona. His body was brought to Bombay by train and shipped for interment in Najaf. Mukhi Kassim Musa (d. 1314/1896), the then estate agent, was entrusted its responsibilities from Bombay to Najaf.

SULTAN MUHAMMAD SHAH, AGA KHAN III (1302-1376/1885-1957), 48TH IMAM

His name was Muhammad Sultan, also known as Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah, the Aga Khan III, born at Honeymoon Lodge in Karachi on Friday, the 25th Shawal, 1294/November 2, 1877 at 5:30 pm. When the news of his birth was routed to Imam Hasan Ali Shah in Bombay, he said: "Name him Muhammad Sultan. He will be a Sultan (emperor) in the world. His period will witness wonderful events, and will earn distinguished position in the world."

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His father, Imam Aga Ali Shah had declared him as his successor for the first time in the village of Kamod in Ahmadabad on December 12, 1884, whose official *farman* was sent to Varas of Junagadh. Imam Aga Ali Shah returned to Bombay on December 16, 1884 just one day before the death of Pir Shihabuddin Shah. On January 14, 1885, the Imam took his son and successor in the Bombay Jamatkhana and made him seated on the throne and said the *jamat* to perform his *dastbosi*. Thousand of persons participated in the ceremony.

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He ascended the throne of Imamate at the age of 7 years, 9 months and 16 days on 6th Zilkada, 1302/August 17, 1885. The British empire awarded him the title of **His Highness** in 1886 in the time of Lord Reay, the then governor of Bombay. On that occasion, the Iranian king sent him a sword and an ivory stick as presents.

Until the age of 18 years, he received education in Bombay and Poona. He was deeply indebted to his learned and wise mother, Lady Aly Shah, to whom he owed his liberal and extensive education. Though deprived of the paternal solicitude of his father at the age of 8 years, his mother took abundant parental interest in his education. Besides oriental languages like Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Hindi, he also developed command over English, French and Germany. Along with Islamic education, he also studied western thought, sciences, metaphysics, astronomy and mathematics from his three European tutors. He had a gifted and farsighted mother, Lady Aly Shah, who engaged best scholars to teach him Koran, Hadith and oriental languages. She also played a seminal role in the administrative affairs of the Ismaili community through a council committee.

He started visiting the Ismaili communities outside Bombay in 1312/1894. He made his debut as an educational reformer and visited the Mohammadan Anglo Oriental College in Aligarh (high fort), about 79 miles south-east of Delhi, on November 22, 1896 and had a productive meeting with Sir Ahmad Khan (1817-1898). Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had founded the Aligarh College on November 1, 1875, and was the vice-President of the College Fund Committee as well as its Honorary Secretary. Willi Frischauer also writes in **The Aga Khans** (London, 1970, pp. 56-7) that, "How wonderful if Aligarh could become a full university to bring up a generation of young leaders and advance the cause of Islam. Here was a chance to follow in the footsteps of his ancestor who had founded al-Azhar, the first Muslim university, which greatly appealed to the young Aga Khan. He decided to put up money for the cause and persuaded wealthy friends to contribute. It was a long struggle but he missed no opportunity to plead for this cause and when Aligarh finally became a university two dozen years later, it was more to Muslims than a seat of learning. In retrospect it was recognized as the intellectual cradle of independent Pakistan and the Aga Khan's enthusiasm and support which made it possible earned him a place among Pakistan's founding fathers."

In 1315/1897, a terrible famine had badly shaken the Bombay Presidency. The Imam supplied food and seed, cattle and agricultural tools to the needy people, and in order to provide job opportunities, he started the construction of his Yeravada Palace at Poona. In Bombay, a large camp was pitched at Hasanabad, where thousands of people were daily fed at his expense; and to those who were ashamed openly to participate in this hospitality, the grain was provided to them privately for about six months. The famine was followed by the epidemic of bubonic plague and the superstitious people of India refused to be vaccinated against the disease. The Imam obtained the service of an eminent bacteriologist, Dr. Waldemar Mordecai Wolff Haffkine, the Director-in-Chief of the Government Plague Research Laboratory, Bombay. He was a crusader against meaningless superstitions and traditions, when soon after famine came plague, the people were in a panic and there was a hue and cry against inoculation with anti-plague serum. The Imam collected the people at his Khusaro Lodge, where the doctor was staying and addressed meetings explaining the benefits of inoculation. In front of this gathering he got himself inoculated, so as to dispel their superstitious fears, and strengthen their confidence in scientific methods of cure. This prompted others to follow and many lives were saved as a result. In the meantime, it had been proposed to give a public dinner to the Imam in view of his outstanding services. When he had been informed of it, he wrote to the Secretary of the Reception Committee a letter, which showed his innermost feeling evoked by the distress of the poor people. He wrote: "I cannot accept any

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entertainment when thousands of people are dying of starvation. It is almost wicked to waste money on rich food when thousands of people are starving. I would urge that every rupee that could be spared should be given for the relief of sufferers by famine instead of wasting it on the entertainments."

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In 1316/1898, the Imam set out from Bombay on his first journey to Europe, and visited France and Britain, where he had an audience with Queen Victoria at Windsor Palace. In the state banquet at Windsor Palace, he was sitting next to the Queen on her right side. He was invested the honourable title of **Knight Commander of the Indian Empire** (K.C.I.E.). He also met the future king Edward VII.

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah paid his first visit to East African countries in 1317/1899, where the Sultan of Zanzibar granted him the title of **Brilliant Star of Zanzibar**. On his second visit to Europe in 1900, the Imam held a meeting with Muzaffaruddin Shah Qajar (1313-1324/1896-1907) of Iran in Paris, who awarded him the title of **Shamsul Hamayun** or **Star of Persia**. He had also a meeting with Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid II in Istanbul, who granted him the title of **Star of Turkey**. The German emperor Kaiser William II also awarded the title of **First Class Prussian Order of the Royal Crownat Potsdam**.

Queen Victoria expired on January 22, 1901. The Imam attended the funeral at London on February 2, 1901. He was the personal guest of emperor Edward VII at his coronation in August 2, 1902, who promoted the Imam from the rank of Knight (K.C.I.E.) to that of **Grand Commander of the Order of Indian Empire** (G.C.I.E.). He returned to India in November, 1902. The viceroy of India, Lord Curzon appointed him to a seat of his Legislative Council of India.

The Imam believed that the root cause of Muslim backwardness in India was illiteracy, and therefore, education was the panacea for their ills. He thought that education should be a medium of service to others and a tool for modernization. According to Islamuddin in **The Aga Khan III** (Islamabad, 1978, p. 22), "It was he, who, translated the dream of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan into reality, by raising the status of Aligarh College into a great Muslim University." Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah states in **The Prince Aga Khan** (London, 1933, p. 65) that, "It was Sir Syed Ahmed who founded Aligarh College, but it was the Aga Khan, an ardent enthusiastic promoter of the ideal of education, who has been mainly responsible for the raising of its status to that of a University."

To make a concerted drive for the collection of funds, a Central Foundation Committee with the Imam as Chairman with Maulana Shaukat Ali (1873-1938) as his Secretary; and prominent Muslims from all walks of life as members was formed at Aligarh on January 10, 1911. The Imam accompanied by Maulana Shaukat Ali toured throughout the country to raise funds, visiting Calcutta, Allahabad, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Lahore, Bombay and other places.

On October 20, 1920, the Aligarh University was granted its official Charter. In spite of several obstacles, the Imam continued his ceaseless efforts for the Muslim University, and further announced his annual grant of Rs. 10,000/- for Aligarh University, which was subsequently raised.

The year 1324/1906 marks the cleavage and culmination of Muslim politics in the subcontinent, when the Imam led the Muslim delegation and met Lord Minto (1845-1914), the Viceroy of India from 1905, at Simla to demand the political rights of the Muslims of India. Lord Minto gave them a patient hearing, assuring that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded in any administrative organization. The Imam realized that the Muslims should not keep themselves aloof from politics because the Congress was already proving incapable in representing the Indian Muslims. At length, the demands of separate electorate and weightage in number in representation to all elected bodies were accepted by the Viceroy Lord Minto, and incorporated in the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909.

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In the meantime, The All-India Muslim Educational Conference met at Dacca on December 30, 1906. The Conference unanimously resolved that a political association styled as the All-India Muslim League be formed to promote among the Muslims the loyalty to the British government, to protect and advance the political rights and interests of Muslims, and to prevent the rise among Muslims of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities. The Imam was thus elected permanent President of the All-India Muslim League and Syed Hussain Bilgrami was made the Honorary Secretary. At the sixth annual session of Muslim League held on March 22-23, 1913 at Lucknow, the Imam resigned from the presidency. In a meeting of the Council of the League, held on February 25, 1914, the Imam was declared the Vice-President of Muslim League, and Sir Ali Muhammad Khan (1879-1931), the Raja of Mahmudabad was elected as the second President of Muslim League in the eight session at Bombay on December 30, 1915.

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From 1325/1907 onwards, the Imam established his chief residency in Europe. In 1330/1911, emperor George V visited India and invested him the title of **Grand Commander of the Order of Star of India** (G.C.S.I.). In 1332/1914, the Imam went to Europe and offered his services to the British government during the First World War (1914-1919), urging his followers to help the British authorities in their regions. He was given an eleven-gun salute in 1916 in Britain for his contribution towards the Allied War efforts, which was a rare occurrence in diplomatic history. He was also accorded the status of a **First Class Ruling Prince of Bombay Presidency.**

In 1339/1920, the Aligarh University came into existence with the untiring efforts of the Imam, and he was appointed its first Vice Chancellor in 1340/1921.

In 1341/1923, the Imam took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement with the Indian Muslims, and raised his voice through articles in newspapers and letters to British authorities. This was indeed a critical time that his loyalty to the West and his unbounded love for Islam directly clashed, but the Imam decidedly championed the cause of Islam. He wrote a historic letter in association with Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928), a member of the Privy Council of England, addressed to Ghazi Ismet Pasha, the Prime Minister of Turkey on November 24, 1923, insisting not to liquidate the symbol of Islamic unity, and pleading that the matter of Turkey be given considerable hearing at the conference table. This letter was published in **London Times** on December 14, 1923. Aziz Ahmed writes in **Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan** (London, 1967, p. 138) that, "The letter influenced and possibly precipitated the decision of the Turkish National Assembly taken on March 3, 1924 to abolish the caliphate and to exile Abd al-Majid. This marked the end of a centuries-old institution and of an era in the history of Islam."

His global popularity as a man of peace found expression in a resolution moved in the Indian Council of State on February 5, 1924, recommending the government of India to convey to the Norwegian Parliament the view of the House that, "His Highness Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, the Aga Khan is a fit and proper person to be awarded the Noble Prize for Peace in this year, in view of the strenuous, persistent and successful efforts that he had made to maintain peace between Turkey and the Western Powers since the armistice."

The Imam led the Muslim delegation to the first Round Table Conference, held in St. James Palace in London on November 12, 1930, to consider the future of India. There were 57 members of the British Indian delegation, representing all the Indian parties except the Congress. The Muslim Delegation was led by the Imam and other eminent members, like Mahomed Ali Jinnah, Sir Mohammad Shafi, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Dr. Shafat Ahmad, Sir Zafrullah, Nawab Chhatari and Fazl-ul-Haq. Prominent among the princes were the Maharajas of Bikaner, Alwar and Bhopal, and among the eminent Hindu leaders were Sir Tej Bahadur Supru, Jayakar, Shashtri, Dr. Moonje and others. The Conference was presided over by Lord Sankey. In the deliberations of the Conference, the Imam played a dominating role. At the second Round Table Conference, the British government was keen to secure the co-operation of the Congress, and the Viceroy proposed to nominate Dr. Ansari and Sir Ali Imam. As both were staunch supporters of the Nehru Report, therefore, Sir Fazl-i-Husain (1877-1936) protested and averted all possible dangers to the unity of the Muslim Delegation. The Imam, as its leader, held at the members together and prevented disruptive tendencies from growing up among the Muslims. Azim Husain quotes a

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letter of Sir Fazl-i-Husain, addressing to Dr. Shaffat Ahmad Khan on July 28, 1931 in **Fazl-i-Husain** (Bombay, 1946, pp. 251-2), which reads: "Whatever lionizing may take place of Gandhi in London, you Muslim members of the Delegation, if you played your cards well, would have a pull over all other communities in as much as you have the Aga Khan, who stands pre-eminently in English public life, and no more popular figure, whether English or Indian, exists there. So, if you held together and acted under the Aga Khans's guidance, no harm could possibly come to you."

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The Imam was better suited than any other Muslim leader for the negotiations that were to ensue. The second Round Table Conference opened on September 7, 1931. The distinguished group of newcomers included Gandhi, Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Dr. S.K. Datta, G.A. Birla, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mrs. Naidu and Sir Ali Imam. M. Abdul Aziz writes in his **The Crescent in the Land of the Rising Sun** (London, 1941, p. 146) that, "The Round Table Conference in London have happily shown us the way how to deal with problems which appeared at first sight to be insoluble, and, in this connection, I desire - and I am sure every Muslim in India desires with me - to pay a tribute to the great services which His Highness the Aga Khan has rendered during the deliberations of the Round Table Conference and the sessions of the Joint Parliamentary Committee to the cause of the Muslims in India."

After the termination of the conference, the British parliament took its turn to consider the question of the future government of India. Thus, a strong parliamentary committee was set up to go over the matter. The committee was in almost unbroken session of 18 months, holding 159 meetings. The striking feature of this committee was the presence in it of some of the delegates from India, who took part in the examination of 120 witnesses and in the committee's private discussion. The Imam headed the list of 21 key leaders whom the committee consulted at every step. Under the wise and able leadership of the Imam, the Indian Muslims came up with flying colour from the Round Table Conference. He had piloted the ship with skill and courage and brought it safely into harbour. He played his cards remarkably well and with his inimitable tact. The Imam had also a meeting with Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) in London. This conference continued until 1934, marked the climax of the Imam's involvement in Indian politics.

Writing his congratulations to the Imam, Sir Abdullah Haroon had routed a telegram to London on December 27, 1932 that:- "On behalf of Sind please convey my heartiest thanks to all Round Table Delegates especially Muslim Delegation whose labours crowned with success. Sind and Muslims of India never forget Your Highness services which you are rendering. May Allah reward you" (vide **Haji Sir Abdoola Haroon** by Al-Haj Mian Ahmad Shafi, Karachi, 1939, pp. 85-6). In addition, Shafaat Ahmad Khan wrote a letter to Sir Abdullah Haroon on January 17, 1932 from Allahabad, wherein he describes, "Aga Khan is our greatest Muslim leader in Asia, and Jinnah is also a man of extraordinary vision." (Ibid. p. 100)

To separate Sind from the Bombay Presidency was a colossal problem. It loomed so large on the political horizon that it eclipsed all others, because Sind separation assumed a communal colour. Long and bitter were those days of uncertainty for Muslims. In 1935, the Imam was appraised of the benefits that would accrue to Sind after separation. He gave the problem a close and careful consideration. The Muslims of Sind were convinced that their cause was in safe hands. Then came that day of rejoicing when Sind separation was accepted in principle and subsequently confirmed by the Parliament and thus the provincial independence was won for the Muslims of Sind. Muhammad Hashim Gazdat urged the Imam that, "We people of Sind will be happy and proud if you may arrive in Sind as a first governor." The Imam replied that, "My friend, I have no desire to be a governor, but I am a governor-maker."

It is difficult to sum up the services of the Imam hitherto he rendered for the cause of the Indian Muslims. K.K. Aziz however writes in his **History of the Idea of Pakistan** (Lahore, 1987, 1:94) that, "He played an important part in the elevation of the Aligarh College to the status of a Muslim university; his role in the Muslim struggle for winning separate representation was vital and extended from the 1906 Simla deputation to the working of the 1935 reforms; his exertions in the direction of uplifting the community were generous, commendable and sincere; his sustained and

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anxious efforts to extract safeguards for the Muslims from the British government were often successful and brought much security to the community. These are valuable services which every prejudiced historian will acknowledge gladly and readily."

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At the end of the First World War in 1918, a Paris Peace Conference had been formulated by the Allies in 1919, being composed of four leading statesmen, viz. Lloyd George representing Great Britain, M. Clemencean France, Signor Orlando Italy and President Wilson, the United States; and finally The League of Nations was founded in Geneva in January, 1920 and M.P. Hymans of Belgium was appointed the first President. The Imam led the Indian delegates in Geneva, and attended the Disarmament Conference, where he delivered a stirring speech on February 19, 1932. He also attended the Third Disarmament Conference and made a speech on February 2, 1933. During the 15th session of the League of Nations, the Imam also gave his speech to the assembly on September 27, 1934. He also addressed the League of Nations in Geneva during its 17th session on September 29, 1936. In sum, the Imam's interest in international affairs in Geneva culminated in his election in the session of July, 1937 as the President of League of Nations in place of the former President, M.P. Van Zeeland of Belgium, and all the 49 votes cast in a secret ballot were found to be in his favour.

The Imam made his first presidential speech in the League of Nations on September 13, 1937 during its 18th session. Thus, Sir Samuel Hoare, the ex-Secretary of State of India was compelled to remark that, "The Aga Khan does not belong to one community or one country. He is a citizen of the world par excellence."

During the Second World War (1939-1945), the Imam once again urged his followers to support the British cause in the war. The Imam presided over the convocation of Aligarh University in 1938, and in its conclusion, he put his resignation from Pro-Vice Chancellorship in favour of Nawab of Rampur. The University was keen to have him associated, therefore, he was elected the Rector of the University. On June 16, 1945, the Imam presided over the first East African Muslim Public Workers Conference, and also held an historical Mission Conference of the Ismailis in Dar-es-Salaam.

In 1949, the Imam was declared an Iranian citizen and was awarded the title of **Hazratwala**, i.e. **His Royal Highness** by His Imperial Majesty the Shahinshah of Iran. He also visited Pakistan for the first time after independence on February 2, 1950 and was awarded an honorary degree of LL.D. from the Dacca University in 1951. On March 3, 1951, the Syrian government invested him the title of **Order of Ommayad**. In 1951, the Imam paid his first visit to Iran to attend the marriage of the Iranian king with queen Sorayya. Arriving in Tehran, he looked up at the sky and the land-scape and exclaimed: "What a lovely and beautiful country I have. I had been cherishing for years the desire to visit my beloved native land." On February 11, 1951, one day before the wedding ceremony, His Majesty the King had awarded the **Order of the Crown First Class** to the Imam. During his visit to Iran, he also went to see Mahallat. Thousands of people lined the roads for a glimpse of one whose ancestors had been the revered and benevolent rulers of the area.

The Imam used to raise his voice in the defence of Islam, whenever it was under inroad. In October, 1951, the **London Times** made some unfair allegations against Islam and the Prophet of Islam. In a spirited reply to the **London Times** on October 22, 1951, he said that, "Islam was not only tolerant of other faiths but most respectful and indeed fully accepted the divine inspiration of all theistic faiths that came before Islam." He further said: "If there has been violent reaction against the West in some Muslim countries, the reason is to be found in the attitude and behaviour of the westerners, their ignorance and want of respect for the faith and culture of Islam, of which the reference to that faith in your leading article is a typical and usual example."

His illustrious and outstanding services for the cause of Islam were not confined to newspapers only. As a patron of Western Islamic Society, London, he worked for the educational and social uplift of the Muslims. He built and maintained many mosques, one of them is the Aga Khan

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Mosque at Cardiff. He had also given Rs. 75,000/- for the repairing of al-Aqsa Mosque, and Rs. 25,000/- for the Nairobi Mosque. He also established the Aga Khan Construction Fund to repair Badshahi Mosque in Lahore. In 1936, the Muslims of Sind had formed a committee led by Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah to erect a memorial for the services of the Imam towards the creation of Sind province. It was decided to build a Grand Mosque and name it after the Imam. When he was informed the plan, the Imam agreed to contribute on rupee by rupee basis for the proposed mosque fund, but said: "Why name the mosque after me?" He prevailed upon the committee to name it as Muhammad Jamia Masjid. This clearly shows that he did not wish to bask in the sunshine of acclamation and praise. What he wanted was the greater glory of Islam.

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During his long Imamate period, the Imam devoted much of his time and resources in consolidating and organizing the Ismaili community, especially in India and East Africa. He was notably concerned with introducing the socio-economic reforms, transforming his followers into a modern, self-sufficient community with high standard of education and welfare. The development of a new communal organization thus, became one of the Imam's major tasks.

On October 7, 1955, the Imam sent a message to the world Ismaili *jamat* that, "I regret, owing to old age, I find it difficult to sign regularly my name. In view of this from now onwards, in order to have a regular signature, I will write "Mohamed Huseini" in the Arabic Sheikheste and in English my initials "AK". As I have to sign hundreds of letters, it is becoming very difficult as one approaches eighty to keep a regular signature." Yours affectionately, A.K.

In 1956, Queen Elizabeth of Britain conferred upon the Imam the title of **Grand Cross of the Saint Michael and Saint George** (G.C.M.G.).

He was a prolific writer, and compiled **India in Transition**, published by Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. in 1918, which he dedicated to the loving memory of his mother. It deals the future political affairs of India. On October 29, 1952, he declared in an interview with **New York Herold Tribune**, Paris for compiling his autobiographical work, and began to write it on January 3, 1953. It was published in 1954, entitled **Memoirs of Aga Khan**.

The first marriage of the Imam took place in 1314/1897 with Shahzadi Begum, the daughter of his uncle Aga Jhangi Shah, at Poona. In 1908, he married to Mlle Theresa Maglioni (d. 1926) in Cairo, who bore Prince Aly Salomone Khan on June 13, 1911 at Turin in Italy. She had visited India with his son in 1923, and died on December 2, 1926 at Paris at the age of 37 years. In 1929, the Imam married his third wife, Mlle Andree Carron, who bore his second son, Sadruddin on January 17, 1933. On October 9, 1944, the Imam married his fourth and last wife, Mlle Yvette Labrousse, known as Mata Salamat Umm Habibeh.

Donning the mantle of Imamate in 1302/1885, the Imam had completed 50 years of his spiritual leadership in 1935. His devoted followers, long looking forward to the auspicious day, got feverishly busy to pay a memorable tribute to their Imam. The Ismailis decided that the Golden Jubilee of their Imam should be fitly celebrated by weighing him against gold, and making a present of the gold to him as a mark of their love and gratitude. Bombay was the venue for the Golden Jubilee in India in 1936. On January 19, 1936, the Golden Jubilee of the Imam was celebrated with great pomp at Hasanabad in Bombay, where a crowd of over 30,000 Ismailis was thronged. The second Golden Jubilee was celebrated on March 1, 1937 at Nairobi amid extraordinary jubilations. Once more the precious metal was presented to the Imam as a token of their love and affection, and once more it was given back to them with his blessings.

Sixty years of his benevolent rule as spiritual father gave his grateful community a chance to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of his Imamate by weighing him against diamonds. The first Diamond Jubilee was held on March 10, 1946 in Brabourne Stadium at Bombay.

The second Diamond Jubilee had been celebrated in the sports ground of the Aga Khan Club at Dar-es-Salaam on August 9, 1946. The sum value of the diamonds at each place was again an

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absolute gift to the Imam from his jubilant followers. This vast sum was again invested by him in a trust meant to enrich the life of the community in the educational and commercial spheres

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The platinum jubilee celebration, marking the 70th anniversary of the Imamate was festivated at Karachi on February 3, 1954. The celebration culminated in the weighing of the Imam against platinum. The funds collected at the celebration were used for the implementation of multi-purpose socio-economic projects.

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah, the Aga Khan III, the 48th Imam of the Shi'a Ismaili Muslims died at his villa in Versoix, near Geneva on 12th Zilhaja, 1376/July 11, 1957. Umm Habibeh Mata Salamat sent following telegram:

Geneva: 11th July, 1957
Our beloved Hazar Imam is no longer physically with us. He left this world peacefully in his sleep this morning.

Prince Aly Khan also sent following telegram:

Geneva: 11th July, 1957

Please inform all *jamats* my beloved father bodily passed away peacefully today eleventh July at 12.30 a.m. Heartbroken at our irreparable loss of his constant love, spiritual guidance and leadership. My devoted and ever loving thoughts to all.

A fitting tribute was paid to him by daily English **Dawn** of Pakistan on July 12, 1957 that, "With the passing away of the Aga Khan, we witness the end of an era." According to **New York Times** (July 12, 1957), "The Aga Khan III's death leaves our contemporary world just a little less colorful than it was." He was buried in a permanent mausoleum at Aswan, overlooking the Nile in Egypt. In accordance with his last will, his grandson, Karim succeeded to the Imamate as the 49th Imam.

KARIM AL-HUSAYNI, AGA KHAN IV (1376/1957....), 49TH PRESENT HAZAR IMAM

He was born in Geneva on 28th Ramzan, 1355/December 13, 1936. Lady Aly Shah (d. 1938) had given his name, Karim. He was born in the wake of cataclysm in the world. From the age of four years, he acquired the rudiments of formal education from Miss Doris Lyon, the governess and a friend of his family. He succeeded to the office of the Imamate on July 11, 1957.

During the Second World War (1939-1945), when his father, Prince Aly Salomone Khan had offered his services to the Allies, the Imam with his brother Prince Amyn Muhammad, accompanied by his mother, Princess Tajudawla, had gone to Beirut, and thence to Nairobi on May 27, 1941 via Cairo, where they lived for four years. By the time, the Imam was seven years old, he had been well versed in religious education under the tutorship of Missionary Kaderali B. Patel. In 1943, he led the Eid al-Fitr prayer amidst a large congregation of the Ismailis in the Jamatkhana in Nairobi. On that occasion, his mother remarked: "A great accomplishment for such a small boy." Prayers over, he shook hands and greeted each and every Ismaili. On being asked if he was not tired, he lovingly replied, "I am not at all tired. I am indeed very glad to meet and greet the whole *jamat* and young children on this auspicious occasion of Eid."

At the end of the World War, the Imam went back to Europe on May, 1945, where he joined the Le Rosey School, situated in Rolle, Switzerland. His classmates included numerous Europeans, including the Duke of Kent, the future king Baudoin of Belgium, the Prince Victor Emanuel of Italy, etc. Besides the prescribed education, the Imam was taught Arabic, Urdu and Islamic History at home by Mustapha Kamal of Aligarh University. At the end of seventeen years, his

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school days came to an end and proceeded to United States, where he enrolled as an undergraduate at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachussetts, where Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah had founded a Chair for oriental studies. His style of living at Harvard was quite frugal. John Feil Stevenson, son of the Democratic presidential candidate for America, who was his room-mate, recalls, “Karim didn’t go in much for clothes. During the time I knew him, he owned two suits and one pair of shoes in his closet. I never saw either of them pressed. He had about a dozen neckties, but they were all the same colour.” He didn’t own a car. And even when he was to return to Harvard, after succeeding to the Imamate, his friends were wondering whether he would buy a new suit. Without a car, he queued up for the public bus and strap-hanged when there was no seat available. He lived at Leverett House overlooking the Charles River. He was also a member of the Hasty Pudding Club and of the Islamic Association. He was also on the Freshman Soccer Team and for two years, played hockey with Leverett House in the Intramural competition. He was officially listed on the University roster as Karim Khan.

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Initially, he studied mathematics, chemistry and general science. Soon afterwards, he started study of Islamic history and had an occasion to mix with the eminent professors, like H.A.R. Gibb, Philip K. Hitti etc. Besides his paper on **Islamic Sects and Mysticism**, his paper, **Rise of the Nizaris and the Beginning of Dawa in Indo-Pakistan** was highly applauded by his professors. He however could not finish his another paper on **Free Will and Predestination in Islam** when he had to leave the University.

In 1954, he under the instructions of his grandfather, paid a short visit to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent and East African countries with his brother. During the death of Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah on July 11, 1957, his family members were in Geneva. Otto Giesen, a solicitor with the firm of Slaughter and May, brought the Will of the Imam to Geneva from Lloyds Bank, London, and read it at Barkat Villa before the Imam’s family that:- "Ever since the time of my ancestor Ali, the first Imam, that is to say over a period of thirteen hundred years, it has always been the tradition of our family that each Imam chooses his successor at his absolute and unfettered discretion from amongst any of his descendants, whether they be sons or remote male issue and in these circumstances and in view of the fundamentally altered conditions in the world in very recent years due to the great changes which have taken place including the discoveries of atomic science, I am convinced that it is in the best interest of the Shi’a Muslim Ismailia Community that I should be succeeded by a young man who has been brought up and developed during recent years and in the midst of the new age and who brings a new outlook on life to his office as Imam. For these reasons, I appoint my grandson Karim, the son of my own son, Aly Salomone Khan to succeed to the title of Aga Khan and to the Imam and Pir of all Shi’a Ismailian followers."

Soon after the declaration, the Present Imam sent following message to the world Ismailis:

Geneva : July 13, 1957

On my ascension to the holy Imamate according to absolute will and nomination of my late beloved grandfather of reverend memory, I send my best maternal paternal blessings all dear spiritual children all over the world.

Mata Salamat, Umm Habibeh also sent following message:

Geneva : July 13, 1957

According to Ismaili traditions and in accordance with late beloved Hazar Imam’s explicit will and nomination, Prince Karim has been installed as Hazar Imam of all Ismailis at Barkat Versoix, Geneva in presence of Ismailis from all parts of the world when all Ismailis here paid *bayat* homage and offered loyalty and devotion.

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Raymond Brandy Williams writes in **Religions of Immigrants from India and Pakistan** (New York, 1988, p. 190) that, "The Nizaris are the only Ismailis who claim an Imam for this time in a line that is traced to Ali: Prince Karim Shah, Aga Khan IV, is followed as the forty-ninth Imam with the designation (*nass*) traced back to Muhammad."

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Upon his accession to the Imamate in 1957 at the age of twenty, he interrupted his undergraduate studies at Harvard for a year to visit to the various Ismaili communities, during which time he was installed to the Imamate in a number of enthronement ceremonies held in Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi, Kampala, Karachi, Dacca and Bombay. Having toured for 18 months, the Imam returned to Harvard, where he worked twice as hard, studying as well as guiding the community. He took eight courses instead of four and wrote thesis on relation between Druze and Maronites in Lebanon from 1829 to 1835. He was awarded the degree of M.A. on July 11, 1959 at Harvard, and thus, he remained about 23 months as a student of Harvard University during his Imamate period. He also granted 50,000 dollars worth scholarships for students from the Middle East, Africa, Pakistan, India, Iran and Afghanistan. Already, a large sum had been donated to introduce the Aga Khan Chair of Islamic Studies at the Harvard and Beirut Universities.

The first ceremonial Takhat Nashini of the Imam commemorated in Dar-es-Salaam on October 19, 1957 amid great pomp and splendour, and was attended by 30,000 Ismailis. The next Takhat Nashini took place in Nairobi on October 22, 1957 in presence of 18,000 Ismailis. The third ceremonial Takhat Nashini took place in Kampala on October 25, 1957 among 15,000 Ismailis and other dignitaries and high officials. The next Takhat Nashini was celebrated at Karachi on January 23, 1958 in National Stadium, where a mammoth gathering was recorded to be over 1,50,000. The fifth Takhat Nashini was celebrated in Dacca on February 12, 1958 amongst 30,000 Ismailis, and the sixth one held in Bombay on March 11, 1958 at Walla Bhai Patel Stadium, witnessed by 80,000 Ismailis.

Malise Ruthven writes in **Islam in the World** (New York. 1991, p. 218) that, "The Aga Khan's spiritual authority has enabled him to impose religious and legal obligations on his followers which have allowed them to adjust to modern conditions without loss of religious faith - something which Sunni Islam, with its legalistic and literalistic traditions, has found much harder to achieve. The Ismailis have become the world's most prosperous Islamic community outside the oil regions; it is a community, moreover, whose prosperity has been achieved as a result of its own efforts under a succession of astute and capable living Imams."

In three years (1957-1960), he traveled about 264,000 miles. In 1960, he covered 15,000 miles of back country roads in Pakistan, where he also visited the mountainous region of Hunza.

The Imam continued and extended the modernization policies of his grandfather, and closely supervised the religious and temporal affairs of his followers, through their institutions, and paying regular visits to them. He has shown a particular interest in improving the socio-economic and educational conditions of the Ismailis. In the field of education, he has encouraged the Ismailis to acquire specialized and technical skills, and providing numerous scholarships in western institutions for eligible students. Currently, he supports a network of over 300 educational institutions and programmes in India, Pakistan, Kenya, Tanzania and elsewhere.

On February 4, 1971, the foundation stone was laid for the Aga Khan Hospital with a medical college and nursing school at Karachi, and its nursing school was inaugurated in 1981, which was graded to the University. The Aga Khan University and the University Hospital were built at an estimated total commitment of 300 million dollars. The University's Faculty of Health Sciences consists of a School of Nursing, which began classes in October, 1980 and a Medical College commissioned in September, 1983. The School of Nursing graduated its first class of nurses in December, 1983 and is programmed to educate 110 skilled nurses each year. The 721-bed Aga Khan University Hospital is located on a Campus. The Medical Complex represents both a link to the great Islamic traditions of the past, and a bold progressive action aimed at addressing the health needs of the Third World.

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The Aga Khan Health Services consist of an elaborate network of about 200 health programmes, including six general hospitals in different Asian and African countries. The Aga Khan Health and Education services are available to all people regardless of their caste and creed. Many new projects in these fields were launched during 1982-3 during the Silver Jubilee of his Imamate.

Being keenly concerned with the administrative and economic efficiency of his programme, the Imam promotes and finances many of his different projects in the field of health, education, rural development and social welfare through the Aga Khan Foundation, established in 1967. With headquarters in Geneva and branches in several countries, the Aga Khan Foundation now collaborates with more than thirty national and international organizations for the implementation of numerous programmes in the third world.

For the realization of his economic programmes, the Imam set up the Industrial Promotion Services (I.P.S.) in 1963, operating in several Asian and African countries including Canada. It has launched more than one hundred projects in the field, ranging from textiles to modern enterprises in tourism, providing employment for ten thousand persons. All the Imam's existing projects and institutions relating to the economic activities, are now absorbed into the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. The Fund, established in 1984 seeks to promote economic projects in the third world.

Being a modern Muslim leader with an international outlook, the Imam has shown a profound interest in promoting a better understanding of Islam and its cultural heritage. W. Montgomery Watt writes in **Islamic Philosophy and Theology** (Edinburgh, 1985, p. 154) that, "Under the leadership of recent Imam, the Ismailites have given other Muslims an example of how Islamic faith may be adapted to the modern world and may lead to effective action in it." In pursuit, he has established a number of specific institutions and programmes. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), formed in Switzerland in 1988, promotes and focuses attention on contemporary expressions of the Islamic humanistic tradition. Its objectives are universal, perpetuating what is valuable from the past and to identify directions for the future.

The Aga Khan Award for Islamic Architecture, established in 1976, seeking to encourage architectural excellence for the Islamic world, declaring its prize like a noble prize on every three years from 1980. It includes five prizes to be awarded during 15 years, each prize will cover one lac dollars. Akbar S. Ahmed writes in **Living Islam** (London, 1993, p. 54) that, "In particular his (the Imam) propagation of Islamic Architecture has allowed him to provide a lead and draw in Muslims in all over the world. The combination of tradition and modernity has generated a global feeling of Muslim pride and identity." The students from different Islamic countries also continue to benefit from the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, established in 1979 at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Its mandate is to educate new generations of architects, planners, teachers and researchers. Harvard was chosen because it is a major centre of scholarship in Islamic art and architecture, and MIT because of its expertise in high technology architecture. In the long term, the Program's graduates, two thirds of whom are from the Islamic world, will serve as designers, and teachers of designers of a built environment that meets the needs of societies in transition.

In 1974, the Imam called a meeting of the scholars and members of the eleven Ismailia Associations in Nairobi. It was followed by the Paris Conference in 1975, where an International Co-ordinating Committee was formulated under the Ismailia Association for Kenya, and also the formation of Institute of Ismaili Studies had been finalized to promote Islamic studies. Finally, the Imam announced the formation of the Institute of Ismaili Studies to the world Ismaili *jamats* through a written message on November 25, 1977, during his birth-day celebration, which was held before three days due to the Muharram on December 10, 1977.

None equals the selfless and valuable services of the Imam in the world, which can be gauged from the face of the facts that he has been invested many state titles, key of the city, honorary

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degrees, honorary membership and awards to appreciate his illustrious services. The details follow as under:-

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STATE TITLES

July 26, 1957 : Given title of **His Highness** by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
August 12, 1957 : Awarded the **Brilliant Star of Zanzibar** by the Sultan of Zanzibar.
October 24, 1959 : Conferred **His Royal Highness** by the King of Iran.
October 27, 1960 : Conferred the honour of **Grand Cross of the Order of Prince Henry** by the Portuguese Government.
August 4, 1965 : The President of Ivory Coast decorated with the highest order of the nation, the **Grand Cross of the National Order**.
August 5, 1965 : The President conferred the highest national title, the **National Order** at Ougadougou, Upper Volta.
November 15, 1966: President Philibert Tsiranana of the Malagasy Republic decorated with the country's highest honour, the **Grand Cross of the National Order of Malagasy Republic.**
November 20, 1966 : President Syed Mohammed Sheikh of the Comoros conferred the **Grand Cross of the Green Crescent**
January 15, 1970 : Decorated by President Yahya Khan of Pakistan with the **Nishan-e-Imtiaz**
December 8, 1977 : Invested with the **Order of the Knight of the Grand Cross** by the Prime Minister of Italy, Mr. Guilio Andreotti.
1978 : Received the **Gran Croce della Republica Italiana**, an honour normally reserved for heads of state, in recognition of his contribution to tourism development in Italy. The Imam is the first Muslim and one of the few foreigners to be so honoured.
November 26, 1986 : In Rabat, King Hassan II of Morocco conferred the honour of **Le Grand Cordon de l'Ordre du Trone Cherifien** (Quissam al-Arch), the highest Moroccan title.
October 26, 1988 : Honoured by Italy's President Francesco Cossiga when he was presented with the country's highest honour, **The Order of the Cavaliere del Lavoro** at a ceremony in Rome.
November 7, 1990 : President Francois Mitterand of France presented with the award of **Commander of the Legion d'Honneur**, the highest honour established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802.
November 22, 1991 : King Juan Carlos of Spain presented him with the **Gran Cruz de Merito Civil** at a ceremony at Zarzuela Palace in Madrid.
September 22, 1998 : Tajik President Emomali Rakhmonov awarded with the **Order of Friendship**
July 10, 1998 : Invested with the **Grand Cross of the Order of Merit** by President Jorge Sampaio of Portugal
December, 2003 : His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa of Bahrain invested **The Order of Bahrain** (First Class) at al-Rawdha Palace.
December 31, 2003 : Received the **KBE Order of the British Empire**
June 6, 2005 : Appointed as Honorary Companion of the **Order of Canada** by Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada.

KEY OF THE CITY

March 17, 1962 : The Mayor and Town Council of Arzachena (Sardinia) made an Honorary Citizen of the Town.
August 4, 1965 : The Mayor of Abidjan conferred the honour of **Freeman of Abidjan** and presented with the "Golden Key" to the city.
November 15, 1966 : Presented the Golden Key to the Town of Majunga (in Malagasy Republic) by the Mayor.
April 4, 1980 : Mayor of Lahore presented the Freedom of the City of Lahore.

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February 15, 1981 : Mayor Abdul Sattar Afghani of Karachi presented the "Key of Karachi City".
June 1991 : Received the Huesped de Honor de Granada from the Mayor of Granada.
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September 21, 1992 : Invested with the Honorary citizenship of the city of Samarkand by the Mayor Aziz Nasirov and Governor Palat Majidovich Abdur Rakhmanov.
December 17, 1996 : Received the Key to the City of Lisbon, Portugal.
June 6, 2005 : Received the Key to the City of Ottawa, Canada.

HONORARY DEGREES

November 30, 1967 : Given honorary Doctorate of Law (Honoris Causa) by Peshawar University.
February 6, 1970 : Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred by Sind University, Jamshoro
November 1, 1983 : Honorary Degree of the Doctorate of Laws McGill University.
May 15, 1987 : Conferred with an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) by McMaster University at Hamilton
October 11, 1989 : Awarded an honorary degree of Doctorate of Literature in Education from the University of London (Logan Hall) by Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne, Chancellor of the University.
November 30, 1993 : Awarded Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (LL.D) from the University of Wales by the Chancellor of the University, the Prince of Wales.
May 27, 1996 : Invested with the honorary degree of LL.D by Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.
June 18, 2004 : University of Toronto confers honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.
June 25, 2005 : The American University, Beirut conferred an Honorary Doctorate in Human Letters.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

July, 1981 : Awarded "Honorary Membership" of Pakistan Medical Association.
February 1970 : Pakistan army paid an honour of making Honorary Colonel of the 6th Lancers.
February 15, 1981 : Honorary Membership awarded by Pakistan Medical Association, Sind.
1985 : The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan conferred the honorary fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

AWARDS

January 13, 1962 : Won the **Roberts of Kandhar** challenge cup at Davos, Switzerland, the oldest challenge cup in the world for downhill ski racing.
1987 : King Juan Carlos presented the **Medalla del Oro del Consojo Superior de Colegios de Arquitectos**, at a ceremony at the Royal Palace in the presence of members of the Spanish Architectural Association.
1980 : The School of Nursing of the Aga Khan Hospital and Medical College in Karachi won an **Award of Excellence** from the Boston Society of Architects.
April 7, 1982 : Received The Gold Mercury **AD PERSONAM** Award
March 23, 1983 : Received Pakistan's highest Civil Award, **The Nishan in Order of Pakistan** by President Zia-ul-Haq.
April 13,1984 : Was honoured as **Patron of Architecture** and became the 19th recipient of the Thomas Jefferson Architecture Award, at the university of Virginia.
1991 : Received the **Medaille d'Argent of the Academie d'Architecture de France**.
October 28, 1996 : Received the Prestigious **Hadrian Award** from the World Monument Fund.

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June 7, 2001 : Received the prestigious **Archon Award** from the International Nursing Honour Society, Sigma Theta Tau International.
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January 25, 2005 : The Smithsonian Institution's National Building Museum presented its annual **Vincent Scully Prize** in Washington.
October 3, 2005 : The Afghan President Hamid Karzai presented the Quadriga Award, **United We Care** award during a ceremony in Berlin.
October 4, 2005 : The Scottish Parliament honoured the **Carnegie Medal**, known as the Noble Prizes of Philanthropy in Scotland.

The Present 49th Hazar Imam of the Shi'a Ismaili Muslims has been responsible not only for guiding a progressive community of Shi'a Ismaili Muslims scattered all over the world, but he has also managed a vast complex of administrative, social, economical and cultural enterprises in the world today. In 1976, he moved his headquarters from Switzerland to Aiglemont, Gouvieux, near Paris.

The Imam married Lady James Crichton-Stuart, nee Sarah Crocker-Poole; known as Begum Salima in Paris on October 28, 1969. The Imam's first child, Princess Zahra was born on September 18, 1970. The second child, Prince Rahim was born on October 12, 1971 and the third son, Prince Husayn was born on April 10, 1974. Princess Zahra married to Mark Boyden on June 21, 1997. She gave birth of a daughter, named Sara on November 13, 2000; and a son, IIiyan on May 8, 2002.

The separation of the Imam with his wife, Begum Salima took place at the end of 1994. The Imam asked his lawyers to start divorce proceeding against his wife on September 30, 1994. The Swiss Court officially declared the divorce on March 23, 1995. The second marriage of the Imam was performed with Begum Inaara on May 30, 1998. She gave birth of a son, named Aly Muhammad on March 7, 2000.

On May 26, 1996, the Imam was specially invited to address at Brown University, where he delivered the baccalaureate address to the Class in the Meeting Home of the First Baptist in United States, near the Brown University Campus. He was the first Muslim ever to give the Baccalaureate address at a Brown commencement in the school's illustrious 232-years history. In his speech, Mr. Vartan Gregorian, President of Brown University, said that the Imam embodied the ecumenical spirit that links the three great monotheistic religion: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. He went on to say that as a major activist for civilized humanity and universal values, the Imam's leadership has brought about flourishing systems for welfare, learning, housing and culture. Equally vital are his faith in education and his ability to tap the resources of European, Asian and American institutions of higher learning to enhance the well-being of human kind. "To see how well these enlightened actions succeeded, you need only visit the Aga Khan University and the Aga Khan Hospital in Karachi, where people of different faiths, races and classes receive the same high quality education and care - for that University and that Hospital are the best in the region."

In his Baccalaureate address, the Imam sought to correct the misperceptions about Islam and its followers which exist in the collective consciousness of most Western cultures. He stressed the great need for increase mutual understanding between the Islamic World and the West. He said that such understanding is more essential today because the Muslim World is one of the only two potential geo-political forces, vis-a-vis the West, on the world stage: the other being the East Asian Tigers, and also because in the wake of the Cold War, violence and cruelty are becoming rampant around the world. The Imam also said that "violence is not a function of faith" but rather an effect of demographic economic and political problems in the Muslim World leading to civil unrest and discontent. The Imam further said that "universities in the West" can help "build a bridge across the gulf of knowledge which separates the Islamic World from the West." This bridge, he said could be built upon a common Abrahamic monotheistic tradition and common ethical principles, founded on shared human values. It could help to adapt proven Western method of development to the specific contexts of Islamic countries.

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On October 17, 1996, he delivered a keynote address in The Commonwealth Press Union Conference at Cape Town, South Africa. Other speakers at the Conference included South Africa's Executive Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, former President and Leader of the National Party, F.W. De Klerk, and Britain's Leader of the Opposition, Tony Blair.

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Being the founder and principal shareholder of Nation Printers and Publishers in Kenya, East Africa's leading publishing group, the Imam said in his address that, "The media can help prevent cultural conflicts arising out of the communication revolution of 21st century." He spoke of a spirit of "creative encounter" that the media would need to engender if "the growing demand for cultural integrity was to be reconciled with the dazzling rise of the global village." Explaining to an audience of 300 representatives of the media from some 40 countries of the Commonwealth that the communications revolution was "a two-edged sword, opening doors to the future, but also threatening cultures and traditional values."

The World Monuments Fund honoured him with its prestigious Hadrian Award for his vigorous and fruitful efforts to preserve and revitalize historic cities in the Islamic world on October 28, 1996 at New York. In his keynote speech at the presentation ceremony, Cyrus Vance, a former US Secretary of State spoke of the Imam's commitment to "the preservation and renewal of societies," noting that "the Aga Khan has laboured through out his career....to bridge divisions between the Muslim world and other communities, reminding us that we cannot regard Islamic society as separate from the larger community of nations." It was an endeavour which, he said "is especially vital today, as we face conflicts between nations and cultures." Acknowledging the honour, the Imam expressed the hope that his "efforts for cultural rehabilitation in Islamic societies through architecture will, due to the very diversity of their world address such a wide spectrum of issues, covering such a large number of peoples and places that the lessons learned will in many cases be both universal and replicable for other societies and their inherited cultures."

It must be known that the previous recipients of the Hadrian Award include Prince Charles, David Rockefeller, Dominique de Menil, Paul Mellon, and Marella and Giovanni Agnelli. The Imam is the first Muslim leader ever to receive the Hadrian Award.

The Imam attended the International Islamic Conference, Amman, Jordan held between July 4, 2005 and July 6, 2005. In his speech, he said, "I am happy that we have been invited to participate in the International Islamic Conference being held in Amman, from the 4th to the 6th of July, 2005, under the auspices of the Hashemite Kingdom. In light of the purpose of the Conference, I find it appropriate to reiterate, in my message of greetings, the statement that I made in a keynote address at a gathering of eminent Muslim scholars from 48 countries who attended the Seerat Conference in Karachi on Friday, 12th March, 1976, nearly 30 years ago, which I had the honour to preside at the invitation of the then Minister for Religious Affairs, Government of Pakistan.

In my presidential address, I appealed to our *ulema* not to delay the search for the answers to the issues of a rapidly evolving modernity which Muslims of the world face because we have the knowledge that Islam is Allah's final message to mankind, the Holy Quran His final Book, and Muhammad, may peace be upon him, His last and final Prophet.

These are the fundamental principles of faith enshrined in the *Shahada* and the *Tawhid* therein, which bind the *Ummah* in an eternal bond of unity. With other Muslims, they are continuously reaffirmed by the Shi'a Ismaili Muslims of whom I am the 49th hereditary Imam in direct lineal descent from the first Shi'a Imam, Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib through his marriage to Bibi Fatimat-az-Zahra, our beloved Prophet's daughter.

I applaud Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah, for the foresight in hosting and organizing this International Islamic Conference for the purpose of fostering unity in the Ummah and promoting the good reputation of our faith of Islam. Let this Conference be part of a continuous process of dialogue in the true spirit of Muslim brotherhood so that the entire wealth of our pluralist heritage bears fruit for the Muslim world, and indeed the whole of humanity; for

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ours is the heritage which permeates human dignity, transcending bounds of creed, ethnicity, language, gender or nationality.

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Our historic adherence is to the Jafari Madhhab and other Madhahib of close affinity, and it continues, under the leadership of the hereditary Ismaili Imam of the time. This adherence is in harmony also with our acceptance of Sufi principles of personal search and balance between the *zahir* and the spirit or the intellect which the *zahir* signifies.

I agree with our distinguished hosts and conference participants that there is a need today to define which Madhahib will apply to the *Ummah*. This clarity is critical for modem life in Islam as is evident in areas such as law, access to Islamic banking, or in dealing with the challenges of the rapid generation of new knowledge such as in bio-medical and other scientific fields.

In keeping with our historic tradition of ever abiding commitment to Muslim unity, we reaffirm our respect for the historical interpretation of Islam by our brother Muslims as an equally earnest endeavour to practise the faith in Allah and emulate the example of our Holy Prophet, may peace be upon him, which illuminates Muslim lives and which, Inshallah, will elevate all Muslim souls.

Once again, I congratulate His Majesty and the Hashemite Kingdom for this timely initiative, and I pray for the successful deliberations of the Conference in the spirit of Islamic brotherhood."

The Ismailis are spread almost in every corner of the world at present under the spiritual leadership of the Present Imam. Most of the Ismailis live in their countries with their old traditions. About four distinct traditions are prevalent in the world Ismailis. In Syria, the Fatimid tradition is practiced. In Central Asia, the tradition of Nasir Khusaro is followed. The Khoja Ismailis adhered to the tradition of the Indian pirs, and the Ismailis of Iran are attached to the Alamut tradition. Above all, the fundamental principle of these Ismailis is to recognize the Imam of the Age. During his first visit to Moscow, the Imam said to his followers on January 29, 1995 that:- "First, let me remind you, that for all *murids* of the Imam, whether they are from Central Asia, from India, from Pakistan, from the Western World, the fundamental principle is the recognition of the Imam of the Time. It is he who interprets the faith. It is he who guides the *jamat* in the interpretation of its faith at any time during its lifetime. It is he who supports the *jamats* in various parts of the world, to seek , with the *jamat* and others, to improve the quality of life of the *murids* wherever they may be."

- END -

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APPENDIX I

AYAT AL-GHADIR

The succession to the Prophet is the key question in Shi'ite Islam, and a principal factor separating them from the Sunni majority. It is seen that the Prophet had nominated Ali bin Abu Talib as his successor by rule of *nass* (investiture) and *nass wa-ta'yin* (explicit investiture). During the period of the Prophethood, the designation was made by *nass* from time to time, whose main term was *wali* (helper, lover, guardian or attorney), as it is said in Arabic: *wali amru'l raiyya* (the guardian of the subject), or *wali ahad* (one who succeeds to the office). Different terms were also used on different occasions for the succession of Ali bin Abu Talib in the Koran, such as *Noor, Imam-i Moobin, Rasikhul fi'l Ilm, Ulul Amr, Ilmul Kitab* etc. While the most frequent words used in hadiths, denoting Ali's succession were *Hujjatullah* (God's proof), *Sayedu'l Muslimin* (leader of the Muslims), *Shabih Harun* (like Aaron), *Sahibu'l lawa* (the master of the standard), *Sahibu'l hanz* (master of Kawthar pool), *Babu'l Ilm* (gate of the knowledge) etc.

The *nass wa-ta'yin* was made after the farewell pilgrimage of the Prophet. On Monday, the 20th Zilkada, 10, the Prophet received a revelation before his farewell pilgrimage:- "And you proclaim to the people for pilgrimage. They will come to you on foot and lean camel, coming from every remote place." (22:27)

Due proclamation was made among the Muslims to join the pilgrimage, and the Prophet himself left Medina on Saturday, the 25th Zilkada, 10. He reached Mecca on Wednesday, the 7th Zilhaja, 10, and performed the pilgrimage. He delivered a historical sermon at the plain of Arfat. He left Mecca on 14th Zilhaja, 10. His caravan reached a little before noon to a pond (*ghadir*), known as Khum, on 18th Zilhaja, 10/March 16, 632. It is situated about 3 miles north-west of Mecca in the heart of the desert, called Sahara'i Huja, about 3 miles from the town, al-Jahfa. Here, the Prophet received the following Koranic revelation: -

"O' Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed upon you from your Lord, and if not, you have not delivered His message. And surely God will protect you from men." (5:67). This Koranic verse is known as the Ayat al-Ghadir.

The town al-Jahfa was a junction from where the routes for Medina, Egypt, Syria and Iraq radiated in different directions. On its border is a pond (*ghadir*) with a vast open plain, embosomed with trees and bushes, which had been swept off. Under the shade of two trees, a big pulpit for the Prophet was erected with the camel-saddles. He mounted it and placed Ali on his right. He then delivered a sermon, thanking God for His bounty and stated that he felt that he would die soon. He repeated that he would be leaving two heavy weights i.e., the Koran and his *Ahl al-Bayt*, with them. The two were inseparable. If people held both fast they would never go astray. The Prophet then asked his audience if he was not superior to the believers. The crowd answered in the affirmative. He then declared: "Whose Master (*mawla*) I am, this Ali is his Master (*mawla*)." He then prayed, "O God, be the friend of him who is his friend, and be the enemy of him who is his enemy." After the sermon, the Prophet dismounted and retired to his tent. He asked Ali to accept the people's congratulation and allegiance. It clearly means that he had done what was assigned to him: "Know that the sole duty of Our Messenger is to convey (*al-balagh*) clearly (the divine words) (5:92). On that day, the Koranic verse revealed: "This day I have perfected (*akmaltu*) your religion, and completed My favours unto you, and I have chosen Islam for your religion (*din*) (5:3).

The bone contention between the Shi'ites and Sunnites is not, however, and never has been, the authenticity of the event of Ghadir Khum, but the real disagreeent is in interpretation of the word

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mawla used by the Prophet. The Shi'ites unequivocally take the word in the meaning of leader, master or patron. The Sunnis interpret it in the meaning of a friend, or the nearest kin and confident. But, it does not seem to be logical for the Prophet to keep more than a hundred thousand people in such unbeatable heat, and keep them waiting in such condition until those who have left behind reach the place, and then all to tell them was that "Ali is the friend of believers." Besides, how can we justify the revelation of verse 5:67 which was revealed before the speech of the Prophet. Is it logical to say that God warned His Prophet that if he did not convey the message of "friendship of Ali," he has spoiled all he had done?! Also what danger can be imagined for Prophet if he stated "Ali is the friend of believers?" Furthermore, how can the phrase "Ali is the friend of believers" complete the religion? In fact, when a word has more than one meaning, the best way to find out its true connotation is to look at the association (*qarinah*) and the context. The word *awla* used by the Prophet gives a good association for the word *mawla*.

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At the end of his address, the Prophet said twice: "Behold! Haven't I conveyed the message of God? It is incumbent upon every one who is present to inform the absent for they may understand it better than those who are present" (**Bukhari**, 5:688). It suggests that the Prophet was conveying a very important message, which was going to be transferred to all coming generations. This message could not have been a simple friendship.

The earliest source of the event of Ghadir al-Khum is Asma bint Umays (d. 38/658), the wife of Jafar Tayyar bin Abu Talib. Her report has been documented in **at-Tarikh** (Beirut, 1960) by the historian Yaqubi (d. 284/898). Hassan bin Thabit (d. 40/661), a famous poet had vividly versified the event in his **Diwan** of 228 poems. Suleman bin Qays al-Hilali (d. 82/701) also is ranked among the earliest authorities. Kumyt bin Zaid (60-126/680-744) however is considered as the most earliest authority by the German scholars, Horovitz and Goldzier. Among the prominent Companions, who had related the event of Ghadir al-Khum are Abuzar Ghafari (d. 32/653), Huzaifah al-Yameni (d. 29/650), Abu Ayub Ansari (d. 50/670), Ammar bin Yasir (d. 37/657), Salman al-Faras (d. 36/657), Abdullah bin Abbas (d. 86/705) etc. Among the earliest Umayyad historians, the most famous were Ibn Shihab az-Zuhari (50-125/670-744) and Ibn Ishaq (d. 152/769).

The historians and compilers of the hadiths between 10/632 and 300/912 were mostly under pressure of the ruling powers of Umayyad and the Abbasid, therefore, they avoided to refer the event, such as Ibn Hisham (d. 218/833), Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845) and Tabari (d. 310/922). Nevertheless, Nisai (d. 151/768), Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 241/855), Tirmizi (d. 279/893), Ibn Majah (d. 283/897), Abu Daud (d. 276/890) and Yaqubi (d. 284/898) had demonstrated their impartiality, whose bold assertion lends colour to this historical event. In sum, Hussein Ali Mahfuz, in his researches, has recorded with documentation in **Tarikh ash-Shi'a** (Karbala, n.d., p. 77) as quoted by Dr. S.H.M. Jafri in **Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam** (London, 1979, p. 20) that the tradition of Ghadir al-Khum has been narrated by at least 110 Companions, 84 *tabi'un*, 355 *ulema*, 25 historians, 27 traditionists, 11 exegesis, 18 theologians and 5 philosophers.

MEANING OF THE WORD "MAWLA"

Some 127 meanings of the word *mawla* have been given in the lexicons, notably *master, lord,* or *one who deserves superior authority, guardian* or *patron*. The Koran says, "God is Guardian (*mawla*), and He gives life to the dead" (42:9) and "He is your Master (*mawla*); how excellent the Master (*mawla*) and how excellent the Helper!" (22:70). The word *mawla* occurs in different forms in the Koran, such as *mawali* (4:33. 19:5), *mawalikum* (33:5), *al-mawla* (22:13, 44:41), *mawlakum* (3:150, 8:40, 22:78, 57:15, 66:2), *mawlana* (2:286, 9:51), *mawlahu* (16:76, 66:4) and *mawlahum* (10:30). As the words *ana awla* (I am superior) indicate that *mawla* means *awla* (superior). What the Prophet meant by this sentence was, God is superior in right and might to

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him and he is superior in right and might to the faithful and Ali is superior in right and might to all those to whom the Prophet is superior.

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During the event of Ghadir al-Khum, the Prophet asked the people, who has the greatest right upon you? (*man awla bikum*). The people replied that God and His Prophet knew better. The Prophet then said, Have I not right on the believers more than their own selves (*alastu awla bi-mu'minin min anfuihim*), according to what God, the Exalted has commanded in the Koran (33:6) that, "The Prophet has a greater right on the believers than they have on themselves" (*awla bial-mu'minin min anfusihim*). The people replied, "Yes, O Prophet of God." After repeating it three times, the Prophet took the hand of Ali bin Abu Talib and said, "Whose Master (*mawla*) I am, this Ali is his Master (*mawla*)." Thus, the word *mawla* refers to one who deserves superior authority. As the words *ana awla* (I am superior) indicate that *mawla* means *awla* (superior). What the Prophet meant by this sentence was, God is superior in right and might to him and he is superior in right and might to the faithful and Ali is superior in right and might to all those to whom the Prophet is superior.

APPENDIX II

IMAGE OF ISLAM IN WESTERN COUNTRIES

Islam originated from monotheism, it conceived idolatry as its real enemy and acted with the purpose of subduing it first in the Arabian Peninsula. The Muslims marched northward into Syria, defeated the army of Heraclius at Yarmuk, and captured Jerusalem and Damascus. They went eastward into Iraq, defeated the Iranian at Seleucia. They further went westward and occupied Egypt away from the Byzantine empire. "In all this expansion" writes T.C. Young in **Near Eastern Culture and Society** (New Jersey, 1951, p. 100), "there was no forcible conversion of Jews or Christians to the Muslim religion. There was freedom for the people of the book to continue in their own beliefs and practices."

The Koran accepts Christianity and Judaism as divinely revealed religions, therefore, it did not instigate any struggle against them. Christianity first however conceived of Islam as a competitor and therefore, attacked it directly. Since inconoclasticism of Islam was against their frame of mind, the Christianity started a crusade against Islam, and their reaction in the East and West took different forms. The Christians tried to distort the very image of Islam through their propaganda machinery. John of Damascus (675-749) in his book, **De Haeresibus** considered Islam as heresy. The first Byzantine writer who referred to the Prophet of Islam was Theophanes the Confessor (d. 202/817), attacked Islam as wildly as John. Guilbert de Nogent (d. 518/1124) criticized on the fact that wine and pork were tabooed in Islam. Guillaume de Tripoli's work during 12th and 13th century was based with extreme hate and was most offensive. Raymond Lull (d. 716/1316) studied Arabic and Muslim philosophy in Tunis, and suggested to the then Pope to start a moral crusade against Islam. Marco Polo spoke of the Muslims as the worshippers of Muhammad. Renan wrote that Muhammad invented a new religion to revenge himself on his brethren. Roger Wendover (d. 635/1237) and John Maundeville (d.757/1356) attained mastership in cultivating quite senseless and baseless stories for the Prophet. Saint Eulogius also applied savage language for Islam to its extreme. Diceto followed Sigebert (1030-1112) to describe that the Muslims offered Muhammad the worship of Godhead. Edward Herbert (1583-1648) wrote that Muhammad preached against Pope Boniface's usurpation of the title of Universal Bishop. Pedro de Alfonso wrote that the Prophet attempted to become king under the veil of religion on the model of David and Solomon. Fantastically, du Pont mentioned that the Prophet not only allowed every male to have ten wives, but every woman ten husbands. Thus, in the fabulous writings, a fairly consistent picture of Islam was designed in the western countries. The blind and fictitious literary aggression in Europe, however, continued for a long period without any break. They knew the historical fact less, but propagated more on the basis of fairy tales, which can be gauged from the report of a Latin author, Joinville (1224-1317), who was quite unknown with the

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relationship of the Prophet with Ali, making the latter as the uncle of the former. Lemons made A'isha as the first wife of the Prophet. Pedro wrote that the Prophet's father Abdullah was known as Habedileth, that is, "slave of the idol Leth." When mentioning the Prophet's name, Hottinger says: "at the mention of whom the mind shudders." Thus, in view of H. Reland, "No religion has been more calumniated than Islam in western literature." Curiously enough, Peter Heylyn wrote in 1621, a geographical treatise, **Mikrokosmos**, wherein he describes, "Deprived of both his parents when but two years old, Muhammad was left unto the care of an uncle, who not able to give him education, sold him at 16 years of age to the Ismaelites, by whom exposed to sale in the open markets; he was bought by a certain Abdalmutaliffe, a wealthy merchant. On his master's death, Muhammad falls heir to his wealth by marrying his widow."

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During the early part of the Middle Age, the Prophet was mostly pronounced in the occidental literature as **Bafum, Maphomet, Mammet, Mahound** or **Mawmet**. The western poets, romancers and composers of plays also rendered the terms of **Mahoune, Mahown, Mahoun, Mahon, Macon** or **Maho**. The Prophet was also described as **Saint Mahoun**, **Lord Mahown** or **Sir Mahown**. During 12th century, the usage of **Mawment** ultimately passed to **Mahomet**, and was also latinized as **Machumat, Machomet, Magmed** and **Moomethes**. The negative approach of the westerners can be seen further from their writings, in which the Muslims had been termed with different misnomers, such as **Infidels, Miscreants, Paynims, Pagans, Heathens, Heathen hounds, Enemies of God, the Turks, Allophilli, Hagarebes, Ishmaelites, Canes, Moabites, Aliens, Gentiles**, etc., and occasionally **Goths** and **Vandals** in the poetical works. The most popular term, however, was the **Saracens**.

The crooked approach towards Islam can be judged from the fantastic prophecies of Sansovino and countless others, limiting the life of Islam to a millennium. According to **Flowers of History** (Bonn, 1849, 2:515), the astronomers of Toledo record that, "Within seven years from the year of 1229, a doubt will spring up amongst the Saracens, they shall abandon their mosques and embrace Christianity." Emperor Leo of Constantinople predicted that Islam would be destroyed by a light-haired family! In the reign of the Empress Theodora, a prophecy was announced about the end of the Muslims on the whole by the Macendonians.

During the early part of the Middle Ages, when Islam and Christianity were arrayed against each other as opposing camps, and often there was an open war, all sorts of blasphemies were invented further against Islam. Peter the Venerable (1094-1156) had the Koran translated for the first time from Arabic into Latin, whose purpose was to refute Islamic mission. Another Koranic translation brought forth by Robert of Ketton in 1143. It was followed by the translation of Mark of Toledo (1190-1200) under the title, **Alcorani Machometi Liber.** The same period produced Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) and Raymond Lull (1232-1316), whose writings were absolutely unreliable and untrue. Ranulf Higden (d. 1364) and John Mandeville (1300-1372) repeated once again the legends of 11th and 12th centuries about the Prophet. Further, the Crusades according to Calverley poured out false informations for several centuries to all people of Europe, and the false reports brought back by the Crusaders, filled the west with popular misinformation that western mass education has not yet able to remove.

In spite of the fact that the Renaissance became possible only through profiting by Muslim works on science and philosophy, and their translations thereof for centuries, the attitude of some western people, who were hostile to the very civilization that created these works indicates how deep-rooted the religious, political and racial prejudices were in vogue. Europe remained ignorant of Islam for a considerably long time, and when it tried to get it know, it was suffering from strange notions-calumnious as well as whimsical. The writings of John Bale (1495-1563) and Henry Smith (1560-1591) however indicate an unchanged thinking of the westerners about Islam. Between 1572 and 1575, many traditional predictions also poured down in Europe against Islam. An Abyssinian prediction relates that, "Mecca and Medina shall be destroyed soon." The prophecy of the wandering Jews, broadcast at Astrakhan in 1676, assigned the year 1700 for the breakdown of the Turks and Islam.

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During the later period of the Middle Ages, and the early and later periods of the Modern Age, the original sources almost came to the hands of the European scholars, giving rise to the scholarly and creative spirit in Islamic study, and a humanistic turn began to appear in western thought. With the establishment of the College de France in 1500 at Paris, the oriental language had been included in its curriculum, and Guillaume Postel was the first from this college to compile Arabic grammar in 1560. The French king Henry III (1551-1588) established a chair of Arabic in this college in 1587. Soon afterwards, in 1613, a chair of Arabic was created at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. In England, a chair was created at Cambridge in 1632 and one in Oxford in 1634. Pope Gregory (d. 1591) also founded a printing press at Rome to publish books in Arabic characters, and the **al-Qanun fi't Tibb** of Ibn Sina was its first publication. Louis le Dieu also put forth a Persian grammar in 1639 at Holland. Golius (d. 1667), Arpineus, Edward Pecock and Hattinger studied the translated Arabic works, but they mostly referred to the translated Arabic works of those Christian writers who lived in Islamic countries, such as Sa'id bin Bitriq (877-941), the Patriarch of Alexandria; Ibn al-Amind al-Makin (d. 1237), the courtier of the Egyptian kings, and Abul Faraj ibn Ibri Malati (d. 1286), the Christian scholar in Egypt. The period under review, however, was not quite barren in attacking the Islam. The noteworthy work is Pierre Bayle's **Mahomet** (Rotterdam, 1697), in which he described the Prophet as a "false" and the "arch-enemy of Christianity.!"

It will perhaps be well at this stage to glance at Bibliotheque Orientale produced by Barthelmi D'Herbelot (1620-1695) in that period in France, which is undoubtedly the original forebear of the modern **The Encyclopaedia of Islam** (1908), whose titles were compiled by the non-Muslim scholars.

During the later period of the Modern Age, it appears that the western aggressive propaganda had continued, but this period is remarkably noted also for bringing forth few eminent scholars on Islamic studies. H.Roland, the Dutch scholar and Utrecht professor of theology, who in the beginning of the 18th century, frankly and warmly recommended the application of historical justice towards Islam in his short Latin sketch of Islam, entitled **H. Relandi de religione Mohammedica libri duo** (Utrecht, 1704). He also recommended the Muslim authorities and sources to speak for themselves, and wrote, "Let the Moslems themselves describe their own religion for us; just as the Jewish and Christian religions are falsely represented by the heathens, so every religion is misrepresented by its antagonists. We are mortals, subject to error, especially where religious matters are concerned, we often allow ourselves to be grossly misled by passion." Jacob Ehrhart is famous for publishing a short examination of the charges made against the Prophet and Islam in 1731. The translation of Koran by Edward Sale (1697-1736) came out in 1734, who matched the Prophet in his preface, with Thesee and Pompilius, and praised his mission. Boulainvilliers in **Life of the Prophet** tried to prove Islam superior to Christianity in rationalism and realism. Savory's Koran appeared in 1783, making the Prophet as "one of the marvelous persons." Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) also admired Islamic mission in his **La Religion dans le Limites de la simple raison.** Goethe's **Mahomet** published in 1770, who put high remarks on Islamic mission. Turpin's **The Life of Mohammad** in 1773 also contained excellent regards to the Prophet.

In the present period of the Modern Age and onward, the diligent research spirit in the European countries freshly came up, and the collection of rare Islamic documents began to be unearthed. The Arabic teaching had been also included in the leading universities, and mass literature on Islam began to pour out to such extent that it became difficult to compile a list of bibliography of the Prophet. D.S. Margoliouth (1858-1940) remarked, "The list of Muhammad's biographers is inexhaustible, but it is a matter of pride to find a place in it." The most famous works published in England were **Beamfton Sermons** (1800) by Dr. White, **Life of Mohammad** (1815) by Dr. G.B., **Apology for Mohammad** (1829) by Godfrey Higgins, **Life of Mahomet** (1849) by Washington Irving, **Life of Mahomet** (1861) by William Muir, **Mohammad and the Rise of Islam** (1905) by Margoliouth, etc. Germany produced **Islamism** (1830) by Dr. J.A. Muller, **Muhammad der Prophet** (1845) by Dr. G. Weil, **Life of Mahomet** (1851) by Dr. Sprenger, **History of Mohammad's Campaigns** (1856) by Von Kramer, **Muhammaden Studies** (1890) by Ignaz Goldziher, etc. Among the French publications, the most famous are **Islam and Quran** (1831) by Garcin de Tassy, **History of Arabia** (1847) by M. Caussin de Perceval, **History of the Founder of Islam** (1874) by Julius Charles, **Historie de Arabes** (1877) by Sedillot, **Views on Islam** (1894)

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by Henry de Casteri, etc. Holland also brought forth, **Histoire des Musulmanes** (1861) by Dozy, **Mohammad** (1894) by H. Grimme, **Das Laben Muhammeds** (1905) by F. Buhl, etc.

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The most organized research however took place with the foundation of *Ecole des Langues Orientales Vivantes* in 1795 at Paris. Modern orientalism began with this school, founded by Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838). *The Paris Asiatic Society* was founded in 1821, and in 1823 it launched its own periodical, *Journal Asiatique*. In 1834, there appeared the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland***.** But, it is not until nearly a century after the foundation of the Paris school in 1795 that we see the establishment of the *Oriental Studies* in German universities, the opening of the *Seminar fur Orientalische Spranchen* at Berlin in 1887, the introduction of the study of Oriental languages at the Cambridge university and later the founding of the *School of Oriental Studies* at London in 1906. In Russia, foreign specialists in the University of Kazan in 1804, and next one in 1854 had organized an Oriental department in the University of St. Petersburg. The first *International Congress of Orientalists* held also in 1873 at Paris. It was subsequently followed in 1874 at London, in 1876 at St. Petersburg, in 1878 at Florence, in 1881 at Berlin, in 1883 at Leiden, in 1886 at Vienna, in 1889 at Stockholm, in 1894 at Geneva, in 1899 at Rome, and in 1902 at Hamburg. In 1916, the *School of Oriental Studies* was founded in the University of London, which came to be known as *School of Oriental and African Studies* in 1938. Holland was the first to establish *Asiatic Society* in 1778. The English founded one in Calcutta on January 15, 1784 with the untiring efforts of Sir William Jones (d. 1794), and another in 1795 at France. In 1839, a regularly produced journal, the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* took place in India of the *Asiatick Researches* of William Jones's group. In 1841, the Bombay branch issued its own journal. The year 1842 was the founding of the *American Oriental Society* along with its own periodical. In 1849, the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenlandischen Gesellschaft* was launched in Leipzig. It was published by the *German Oriental Society*, which had been formed two years earlier. From 1804, the teaching of oriental languages at university level was extended at Kharkov and, above all, to Kazan in Russia. Thus, the oriental languages like Arabic, Persian and Turkish began to be studied, enabling the scholars to inspect the original source materials. Such was the origin of Orientalism. The term *Orientalist* occurred in England towards 1779, and *Orientaliste* in France in 1799. *Orientalisme* found a place in the *Dictionnarie de l' Academie Francaise* in 1838.

From the 18th century on, the attitude of western free thinkers took a truly humanistic turn. It evoked a strong reaction in Voltaire, who finds much to commend in the precepts of Islam, and was an admirer of Koran, vide **Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations** (Paris, 1858). Turpin's work, **The Life of Mohammad** described the Prophet as a "great prophet", "powerful mind", "true believer" and the "founder of natural religion." Goethe was captivated by the personality of the Prophet and writes, "I could never see Muhammad as an imposter" **(Dichtung und Wahrbeit).** The English historian Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) writes in **Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire** (1848) magnificent pages in defence of the merits of the Prophet. Dieterici, Sedillot, E. Quartermere (1782-1852), Horton, de Boer, Masson Oursel, Goichon, Gardet, Louis Massignon (1883-1962), Rene Guenon, Asin Palacious, E.G. Browne (1862-1926), Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), Wustenfeld (d. 1899), R.A. Nicholson (1868-1945), Hamilton Gibb (1895-1971) etc. are among those who got rid of their prejudice views, and knew how to take fact seriously through scientific research.

It must be admitted that the events of the life of the Prophet were first reduced to writing almost a hundred years after his death, and therefore, the writers had no written sources to fall back upon except memorized reports and traditions. The oral reports that have been in circulation for over a century, cannot be possibly well knit in structure. The historical fictitious and stories were given no floral touches at that time, and were put into writing, and as a result, the most reliable works are also incorporated with such reports that are too weak and doubtful. In a similar situation, when facts have to be recorded long after their occurrence, people generally pick up all sorts of street-gossip, without caring to quote the names of the reporters. This worthless non-historical collection evidently passed for a piece of interesting historical stuff, and the western literature on Islam during and after 18th century is the outcome of such type of materials. The Muslim reporters did not give their first care to the narrations they had sorted out, and the occidental scholars found these collections from the sources, influencing greatly to their writings.

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With the pace of scholarly study in Europe on Islam, it is however learnt the old baseless myths and legends minted almost during 11th and 12th centuries came to be condemned in the light of original materials, resulting the charges on the Prophet to a less number. Bosworth Smith writes in **Mohammad and Mohammadanism** (New York, 1857, p. 63) that, "We cannot imagine what the Muslims will say on hearing all those stories and songs about Islam in vogue in Europe during the mediaeval ages. All these stories and poems are filled with jealousy and enmity due to the ignorance of the religion of the Muslims." Oswald Carlyle in **Heroes and Hero-worship** (London, 1928, p. 35) also referred to these false accusations, and condemned that, “This kind of opinion is shame on us.”

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While examining the western books bank, it appears that the charges yet are being repeated despite several literary efforts of the learned Muslim scholars. Thus, the western writers can be classified safely into three groups: Firstly, those who do not understand Arabic and original sources. Secondly, those who know Arabic, but have no idea of the sources; and thirdly, those who know Arabic and original sources. The scholars therefore, like E.H. Palmer (1840-1882) and D.S. Margoliouth (1858-1940) may be placed in the above third group, and their status may be termed in the words: “I see everything, but understand nothing.” Among the accusations, however, there are few which the European scholars have not yet removed, and continued to repeat, i.e., the spread of Islam by force and sword, the plurality of wives by the Prophet, the approval of slavery, the kingship in Medina etc. Among these charges, the charges of the spread of Islam by sword and the plurality of wives are such that have been stuck in the occidental chronicles since 11th and 12th centuries. There are however, many western scholars who do not accept these derogatory charges.

ISLAM SPREAD NOT BY SWORD

The Prophet waged wars is certain as he was compelled, but never a sword was drawn but as a last resort to defend human life and secure safety to it. Invaded on all sides by his enemies, the Prophet had to take field or send men to meet aggression, which cannot be treated as a crusade. Islam regards war as an abnormal and destructive activity, to which recourse can be had only in the last resort. The Koran describes war as a conflagration, and declares that it is God’s purpose to put out such conflagration whenever it erupts, meaning that when war becomes inevitable, it should be so waged as to cause the least possible amount of damage to life and property, as is said: "Whenever they kindle a fire for war, God extinguishes it. They strive to create disorder in the earth, and God loves not those who create disorder." (5:65) Fighting is permissible only to repel or halt aggression. But even in the course of such fighting, Muslims are not permitted any transgression; as is said: “Fight in the path of God (*fi sabi’l Allah*) those who fight you, but do not transgress limits (*wala ta’tadu)*; for God does not love transgressors” (2:190). Thus, the war was permitted as a measure of self-defence and to put a stop to religious persecution.

It was at the Council of Nicea that Constantine invested the priesthood with that power whence flowed the most disastrous consequences, as the following summary will show: the massacres and devastations of nine mad crusades of Christians against unoffending Turks, during nearly two hundred years, in which many millions of human beings perished; the massacres of the Anabaptists; the massacres of the Lutherans and Papists, from the Rhine to the extremities of the North; the massacres ordered by Henry VIII and his daughter Mary; the massacres of St. Bartholomew in France, in which above 500 persons of rank, and 10,000 of inferior condition perished in Paris alone, besides many thousands who were slaughtered in the provinces. The then Pope Gregory XIII, not only granted a plenary indulgence to all who were concerned in the massacres, but also ordered public rejoicing to celebrate the event; the forty years more of other massacres between the time of Francis I and the entry of Henry IV into Paris; the massacres of the Inquisition, in which the aggregate number of victims burnt from 1481 to 1808 was 34,024; which are more execrable still as being judicially committed, to say nothing of the innumerable schisms, and twenty years of popes against popes, bishops against bishops, the poisonings, assassinations, the bruel rapines and insolent pretensions of more than a dozen popes, who far exceeded a Nero or a Caligula in every species of crime, vice and wickedness; and lastly, to conclude this frightful list, the massacre of twelve millions

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of the inhabitants of the new world, executed Crucifix in hand. "It surely must be confessed" writes John Davenport, "that so hideous and almost uninterrupted a chain of religious wars, for fourteen centuries, never subsisted but among Christians, and that none of the numerous nations stigmatized as heathen, ever spilled a drop of blood on the score of theological arguments." (Ibid. pp. 146-7)

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It must however be remembered that the Prophet's wars however differed essentially from those of Moses in not being wars of extermination, because the prime objectives of the former were to unite Arabian tribes, to reclaim them from idolatry and impart them in the worship of One and Only God. One must judge the motive of the Prophet's wars with the following episodes of the Old Testament: "And Moses said, 'Thus saith the Lord, put, every man, his sword by his side, and go in and out throughout the camp, and slay, every man, his brother, and, every man, his companion, and every man, his neighbour.'" (Exodus, xxxi.27), "Now go (said Samuel to Saul) and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." (I Samuel, xv.3) and "Joshua smote all the countries and all their kings, he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord of Israel had commanded" (Joshua, x.40).

On the contrary, the European writers stigmatized Islam as a religion of sword, which is absolutely wrong with its fundamental teachings. The Prophet commanded in battle, but scrupulously refrained from personally shedding blood. His strategy was always designed to reduce loss of life and human suffering to the minimum. During eight years of fighting, punctuated with pitched battles and numerous pre-emptive expeditions, the total loss of life suffered by his enemies was hardly 759, and that suffered by his own people was no more than 259 during the total 101 expeditions, in which 27 were commanded by the Prophet himself, and the remaining 74 expeditions were led by other persons nominated by the Prophet. It is also a matter of notice that during the 27 expeditions commanded by the Prophet, there were only 8 battles, in which actual fighting took place. Robert L. Gulick writes, "Westerners associate force with the spread of Islam. Their conception of *Jihad* or holy war is distorted beyond recognition. They picture the Saracens with the Quran in one hand and the sword in the other. This is clear case of mistaken identity. The Christians, not the Muslims, were the chief offenders in this respect. In Spain, during the Inquisition, two million Muslims were threatened with death unless they accepted a particular brand of Christianity. It may be stated categorically that the wars of Muhammad were purely defensive in nature. Had they not been waged, the Muslims would have perished with what dire results for the future of civilization one can only imagine" (**Muhammad the Educator**, Lahore, 1975, p. 47). John Davenport also writes, "Mohammad received generously and with open arms all who would submit to his law; he, indeed, put the obstinate to death, but he ever spared the innocent blood of women, maidens and infants. In short, he strictly commanded his followers never to molest, but to treat as brethren, all who would accept and obey the Koran" (**An Apology for Muhammad and the Koran**, London, 1869, p. 142). According to Henry Stubbe, "It is vulgar opinion that Mahomet propagated his doctrine by the sword" (**Rise and Progess of Mahometanism,** London, 1911, p. 192). Godfrey Higgins maintains, "When the Christian priests maintain that the doctrine of Mahomed was indebted solely to the sword for its success, they evidently put the cause for the effect. The sword is of no value without a hand to use it; and it was the enthusiasm of the persons who used it which gave them the victory; and this enthusiasm was produced by a lively faith in the truth of Mahomed's doctrine" (**Apology for Mohamed,** London, 1829, p. 164). "It is a common error to attribute" writes S.P. Scott in **History of the Moorish Empire in Europe (**Lippincott, 1904, 1:120), "the spread of Muhammadanism to the agency of force." T.W. Arnold holds in **The Preaching of Islam** (London, 1896, p. 46) that "These stupendous conquests which laid the foundation of the Arab empire, were certainly not the outcome of a holy war, waged for the propaganda of Islam, but they were followed by such a vast defection from the Christian faith that this result has often been supposed to have been their aim. Thus the sword came to be looked upon by Christian historians as the instrument of Muslim propaganda." D. Lacy O'Leary writes, "History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslim sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of sword upon conquered races is one of the most absurd myths that historians have ever repeated" (**Islam at the Crossroads** London, 1923, p. 8). And writes Joel Carmichael in **The Shaping of the Arabs** (London, 1969, p. 144) that, "The widespread tradition that the early Muslims came pounding out of

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the desert with the Quran in one hand and the sword in the other, converting the infidels by force, is a manifest superstition and adjunct of traditional Christian polemics."

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PLURALITY OF WIVES

Another calumny that is persistently levelled at the Prophet is that in his later life he became licentious. That is an enormity that has only to be contemplated to be immediately rejected as utterly incompatible with his life and character. None of the great religious systems has polygamy been forbidden. The Jewish prophets, including the great lawgiver Moses, had a plurality of wives. No one has ever alleged that because of this they could be accounted as leading virtuous lives. Polygamy is not compulsory in Islam. It is permissible under very strict limitations, the principal one being the maintenance of complete equality between wives, as is said: "And if you apprehend that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one" (4:3).

Polygamy was a custom general throughout the East, so long as the days of Abraham, and which, it is certain, from innumerable passages in Scripture, some of which we shall quote, could not in those purer ages of mankind, have been regarded as sinful. Polygamy was permitted among the ancient Greeks, as in the case of the detachment of young men from the army, mentioned by Plutarch. It was also defended by Euripides and Plato. The ancient Romans were more severe in their morals, and never practiced it, although it was not forbidden among them; and Marc Antony is mentioned as the first who took the liberty of having two wives. From that time it became pretty frequent in the empire till the reigns of Theodosius, Honorius and Arcadius, who first prohibited it by an express law in 393 A.D. After this the emperor Valentinian permitted, by an edict, all the subjects of the empire, if they pleased, to marry several wives; nor does it appear from the ecclesiastical history of those times, that the bishops made any objection to its introduction. Valentinianus Constantius, son of Constantine the Great, had countless wives. Clotaire, King of France, and Heribartus and Hypericus had a plurality also. Add to these, Pepin and Charlemagne, of whom St. Urspergensus witnesses that they had several wives, Lothaire and his sons, as likewise Arnolphus VII., Emperor of Germany (888 A.D.), and a descendant of Charlemagne, Frederick Barbarossa and Philip Theodatus the King of France. Among the first race of the Kings of the Franks, Gontran, Caribert, Sigebert and Chilpheric had several wives, at one time. Gontran had within his palace Veneranda and Mercatrude and Ostregilde, acknowledged as his legitimate wives; Caribert had Merflida, Marconesa and Theodogilda. Father Daniel confesses the polygamy of the French Kings. He denies not the three wives of Dagobert I, expressly asserting that Theodobert espoused Dentary, although she had a husband, and himself, another wife, named Visigelde. He adds, that in this he imitated his uncle Clotaire, who espoused the widow of Creodomir, although he had already three wives. After the emergence of the Protestant school of thought, Philip of Hesse and Frederick William II of Prussia, were permitted by the Protestant Church to contract bigamous marriages. In 1650, the Frankish Kreistag at Nuremberg passed a resolution, allowing everybody to marry two wives. The Anabaptists openly preached that a true Christian must have several wives; and the Morgans regard polygamy as a divine institution.

The Arab social fabric was passing through a serious crisis at the advent of Islam. Inter-tribal wars had destroyed a large part of the male population of Arabia. The very large number of women left destitute and likely to resort to prostitution had to be provided for. In the battle of Uhud, about 70 Muslims fell martyrs, rendering half the Muslim women in Medina widows. The surviving males were directed to marry the widows to alleviate their sufferings. Under these circumstances, the Prophet resorted to polygamy. He restrained polygamy by limiting the maximum number of contemporaneous marriages, and by making absolute equity towards all obligatory on the man. It is worthy of note that the clause in the Koran, which contains the permission of contract four contemporaneous marriages, is immediately followed by a sentence, which cuts down the significance of the preceding passage to its normal and legitimate dimensions. The passage runs thus, "You may marry two, three, or four wives, but not more." The subsequent lines declare, "but if you

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should apprehend that you may not be able to deal justly between your wives, then marry only one" (4:4) Thus, taking into consideration, Islam permitted a limited polygamy, but the aggressive critics try to make out that polygamy is an institution ordained by the Prophet. If we may have a look at the following episodes of the Old Testament, we will find a lavish approval of polygamy:- "There in Jerusalem, David married more wives and had more sons and daughters." (I Chronicles, 14:3), "Solomon married 700 princesses and also had 300 concubines in his empire." (King, 11:3), "The king is not to have many wives, because this would make him turn away from the Lord." (Deuteronomy, 17:17).

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As to the lawfulness of polygamy, it will be known that it was not only approved but even blessed in the Old Testament. For instance, Genesis, xxx, v.22; Exodus, xxi, v.11; I Samuel, i, v.1.2.11, 20; I Samuel, xxv, v.42, 43; 2 Samuel, xii, v.8; 2 Samuel, v., v. 13; Judges, viii, v. 30; Judges, x. v.4; Judges, xii, v.9. 14, etc.

Rev. V.C. Bodley writes, "Muhammad's married life must not be looked at from an occidental point of view or from that set by Christian conventions. There is no reason why the codes of America and Europe should be considered superior to those of the Arabs" (**The Messenger,** London, 1946, p. 202). According to John Davenport, "Mohammad, therefore, did but legalize a practice not only honoured but even blessed by God Himself, under the old dispensation, and declared to be lawful and honourable under the new one; and, consequently, he must be exonerated from the charge of having sanctioned polygamy, and thereby encouraged licentiousness" (**An Apology for Mohammad and the Koran,** London, 1869, p.159). William Muir writes, "In domestic life the conduct of Muhammad is exemplary. As a husband his fondness and devotion were entire. As a father he was loving and tender. In his youth he lived a virtuous life; and at the age of twenty-five he married to a widow forty years old, during whose lifetime for five and twenty years he was a faithful husband to her alone (**Life of Muhammad,** London, 1858, p. 514). Prof. Vaglieri holds, "Enemies of Islam have insisted in depicting Muhammad as a sensual individual and a dissolute man, trying to find in his marriages evidence of a weak character not consistent with his mission. They refuse to take into consideration the fact that during those years of his life when by nature the sexual urge is strongest, although he lived in a society like that of the Arabs, where the institution of marriage was almost non-existent, where polygamy was the rule, and where divorce was very easy indeed, he was married to one woman alone, Khadija, who was much older than himself, and that for twenty-five years he was her faithful, loving husband. Only when she died and when he was already more than fifty years old did he marry again and more than once. Each of these marriages had a social or political reason, for he wanted through the women he married to honour pious women, or to establish marriage relations with other clans and tribes for the purpose of opening the way for the propagation of Islam. With the sole exception of A'isha, he married women who were neither virgins, nor young not beautiful. Was this sensuality?" (**An Interpretation of Islam,** Washington, 1957, pp. 67-8). Frithjof Schuon maintains, "Looked at from outside, most of the Prophet's marriages had, moreover, a political aspect - politics having here a sacred significance connected with the establishing on earth of a reflection of the city of God - and, finally, Muhammad gave enough examples of long abstinences, particularly in his youth, when passion is considered to be most strong, to be exempt from superficial judgment on this account." (**Understanding Islam,** London, 1963, pp. 88-9). C.S. Hurgronji writes, "Polygamy, although allowed, is far from being recommended by the majority of theologians in Islam. Many of them even dissuade men capable of mastering their passion from marriage in general, and censure a man who takes two wives if he can live honestly with one." (**Mohammedanism,** New York, 1916, p. 126).

In conclusion, during his speech in the Brown University, United States on May 26, 1996, the Present Imam of the Ismailis said, "Today in the occident, the Muslim world is deeply misunderstood by most. The west knows little about its diversity, about the religion or the principles, which unite it, about its brilliant past or its recent trajectory through history. The Muslim world is noted in the west, North America and Europe, more for the violence of certain minorities than for the peacefulness of its faith and the vast majority of its people. The word "Muslim" and "Islam" have themselves come to conjure the image of anger and lawlessness in the collective consciousness of most western cultures. And the Muslim world, has, consequently, become something that the west may not want to think about, does not understand, and will

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associate with only when it is inevitable. Not only is this image wrong, but there are powerful reasons that we cannot overlook, for which the west and the Muslim world must seek a better mutual understanding."

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APPENDIX III

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "ASSASSINS"

The Nizari Ismailis were designated with a misnomer, *Assassins* in mediaeval Europe. This is an abusive term that had been given a wide currency by the Crusaders and their occidental chroniclers, who had first come into contact with the Syrian Ismailis in the Near East during the early decades of the 12th century. Charles E. Nowell writes in **The Old Man of the Mountain** that, "In the early years of the twelfth century, as the Christians spread their conquests in the holy land and Syria, they made the acquaintance of the Ismailis. Many of their historians had something to say about the sect, and what they gave was usually a mixture of information and misinformation" (cf. **Speculum**, 12:4, 1947, p. 503).

The Ismailis were not a band of terrorists, but their fighting against their oppressors was a struggle for survival. Mediaeval Europeans, who remained absolutely ignorant of Muslim beliefs and practices, had transmitted a number of tales, and produced a perverted image of the Ismailis. Rene Dussaud writes in **Histoire et Religion des Nosaires** (Paris, 1900) that, "One of the very few Europeans who have appreciated the good points of this remarkable sect and who is of opinion that the judgments pronounced by western scholars are marked by an excessive severity. It is certainly wrong to confound as do the Musulman doctors, in one common reprobation. And the Old Man of the Mountain himself was not so black as it is custom to paint him." In more recent times, too, many western scholars have continued to apply the ill-conceived term *Assassins* to the Nizari Ismailis without being aware of its etymology or dubious origin. Paul E. Walker makes his comments in his **Abu Yaqub al-Sijistani: Intellectual Missionary** (London, 1996, p. 1) that, "Until recently, however, the Ismailis were studied and judged almost exclusively on the basis of the evidence collected or fabricated by their enemies, including the bulk of the medieval Sunni heresiographers and polemicists who were hostile towards the Shi'is in general and the Ismailis among them in particular. These Sunni authors in fact treated Shi'ite interpretations of Islam as expressions of heterodoxy or even heresy. As a result, a 'black legend' was gradually developed and put into circulation in the Muslim world to discredit the Ismailis and their interpretations of Islam. The Christian Crusaders and their occidental chroniclers who remained almost completely ignorant of Islam and its internal divisions, disseminated their own myths of the Ismailis, which came to be accepted in the West as true descriptions of Ismaili teachings and practices. Modern orientalists, too, have studied the Ismailis on the basis of hostile Sunni sources and the fanciful occidental accounts of medieval times. Thus, legends and misconceptions have continued to surround the Ismailis through the twentieth century."

Benjamin of Tudela, the Spanish Rabbi of 12th century, who was the first European traveller to approach the frontiers of China (between 1159 and 1173). He is one of the early Europeans to have written about the Ismailis. He visited Syria in 562/1167, and described in his **The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela** (tr. by Marcus N. Adler, London, 1907) the Syrian Ismailis under the term of *Hashishin*. Next extant description is found in a diplomatic report of 570/1175 of Burchard, an envoy sent to Egypt and Syria by the Roman emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (1152-1190), in which he has used the word *Heyssessini* (in Roman, *segnors de montana*) for the Ismailis of Syria. William (1130-1185), archbishop of Tyre, is the first historian of the Crusades to have described the Ismailis of Syria in 581/1186 with the name *Assissini* in his **History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea** (tr. by Babcock and Krey, New York, 1943, 2:390), but also admits that

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he does not know the origin of this name, and by no means states that it was unknown to the Muslims. The German historian, Arnold of Lubeck (d. 610/1212) used for the Ismailis of Syria the term *Heissessin* in his **Chronica Slavorum** (1869, 21:240). James of Vitry, the Bishop of Acre (from 1216 to 1228), was perhaps the best informed occidental observer of Muslim affairs after William of Tyre. He produced his **Secret Societies of the Middle Ages** (London, 1846), wherein he applied the term *Assasini* for the Syrian Ismailis. William of Rubruck (1215-1295), who had completed his visit of China in 653/1255, seems to have been amongst the first Europeans to have designated the Iranian Ismailis as *Axasins* and *Hacsasins*, hitherto used only for the Syrian Ismailis. The eminent French chronicler, Jean de Joinville (1224-1317) produced a most valuable **Histoire de Saint Louis**, (comp. 1305) relates the Syrian Ismaili ambassadors, who had come to see King Louis IX (1226-1270) at Acre. Joinville referred to the term *Assacis* for the Ismailis. Marco Polo (1254-1324) has also used the word *Ashishin* in his travelogue.

Different etymologies of the modern word *Assassins* are given in the occidental sources, such as *Accini, Arsasini, Assassi, Assassini, Assessini, Assessini, Assissini, Heyssessini* etc. Thomas Hyde in **Veterum Persasrum Religionis Historia** (Oxford, 1700, p. 493) opines that the word *Assassin* must be the word *hassas*, derived from the root *hassa*, meaning *to kill* or *exterminate*. This opinion was followed by Menage and Falconet. De Volney also adopted this etymology in his **Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie** (1:404) without citing any evidence. Historian Abul Fida (d. 732/1331) writes that Masiyaf, a town that was the headquarters of the Syrian Ismailis, is situated on a mountain, called *Jabal Assikkin* (Jabal al-Sikkin). The word *sikkin* means *knife* or *dagger*, and the name of this mountain may thus mean, *the mountain of the knife*. This seems to be some analogy of the coinage of the above westerners, reflecting the view in **Falconet's Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions** (17:163); who called it, *la montagne du Poigard* (mountain of the dagger). Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) however suggests that *sekkin* in this case is the name of a man, so that we should translate it *the Sekkin's Mountain* (*la montagne de Sekkin*). Michel Sabbagh of Acre suggests the origin of *al-Sisani*. Instead of *al-Sisani,* the word often used is *al-Sasani* means *the family of Sasan*. This term is used by the Arabs to indicate an adventurer. Simon Assemani (1752-1821), the professor of oriental languages in Padua, used the word *Assissana* in his **Giornale dell' Italiana Letteratura** (1806, pp. 241-262), and according to him, it is a corrupt form of *Assissani* in connection with the Arabic word *assissath* (*al-sisa*), meaning *rock* or *fortress*, and as such, *Assissani* (*al-sisani*) refers to *one who dwells in a rocky fortress*.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the name *Assassin* received a good deal of attention from western scholars, who threw a flood of theories to explain its origin and significance. The mystery was finally seems to have solved by Silvestre de Sacy, who discovered that the word *Assassin* was *Hashishiyya*, i.e., *the users of hashish*.

The Muslims, having exhausted all their resources of condemnation, now restored to designate the Syrian Ismailis by different religious terms, such as *Batiniyya* and the *Talimiyya*. The Ismailis were also branded as *malahida* (or *mulhidun*) by their sworn enemies. Much less frequently, the Ismailis of Syria were called by other abusive term, such as *Hashishiyya*, i.e., *the users of hashish*. It seems that the oppressors had foiled in their attempt to extirpate the Ismailis and eventually made a last vehement strike upon them.

The earliest reported application of the term *Hashishiyya* to the Ismailis occurs in the anti-Ismaili polemical epistle issued in 517/1123 by the then Fatimid regime in Cairo on behalf of the caliph al-Amir (d. 524/1130), entitled **Iqa Sawa'iqa al-irgham**. This epistle contains the term *Hashishiyya* for the Syrian Nizari Ismailis for two times, vide pp. 27 and 32. It must be known that the well-known event of *qiyamah* celebrated at Alamut in 559/1164 became a main tool of the enemies of the Ismailis to discredit them. The orthodox Muslims waged a bitter propaganda, and uttered all the prevalent abusive terms for them. The dead term *Hashishiyya* once again was given a life, and it came to be used almost for the first time in the Seljuqid literatures. The earliest known Seljuqid chronicle is **Nusratu'l Fatrah wa Usratu'l Fatrah** (comp. 578/1183) by Imadudin Muhammad al-Katib Ispahani (d. 597/1201), which is now extant only in an abridged version compiled by Fateh Ali bin Muhammad al-Bundari in 623/1226, entitled **Zubdatu'n**

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Nasrah wa Nakhbatu'l Usrah (pp. 169, 195). Imadudin begins his chronicle from 485/1092, and did not put his work into its final form until 578/1183 when he had already been in Syria for 15 years. He seems first Seljuqid writer to have used the term, *Hashishiyya* for the Syrian Ismailis. Ibn Muyassar (d. 677/1278) simply states in his **Tarikh-i Misr** (p. 102) that in Syria, the Ismailis are called *Hashishiyya*, in Alamut; they are known as *Batiniyya* and *Malahida*; in Khorasan as *Talimiyya*. Abu Shama (d. 665/1267) also used *Hashishiyya* for the Syrian Ismailis in his **Kitab al-Rawdatayn fi Akhbar al-Dawlatayn** (1:240 and 258). Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406) writing after 13th century, mentions in **Muqaddima** (1:143) that the Ismailis of Syria, once called as *al-Hashishiyya al-Ismailiyya*, were known in his time as the *Fidawiyya*. All this sounds from the extant sources that the term *Hashishiyya* was commonly applied for the Syrian Ismailis between 11th and 12th centuries by the Muslims, and were ceased to be used since 13th century.

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It is to be noted however that Juvaini and Rashiduddin do not use the term *Hashishiyya* for the Ismailis of Iran, as the term was not prevalent during their time in Iran. W. Madelung has however recently discovered in his Arabic Texts concerning the **History of the Zaydi Imams of Tabaristan, Daylaman and Gilan** (Beirut, 1987, pp. 146 & 329) that the Ismailis of Iran too were named *Hashishiyya* in some contemporary Zaidi sources compiled in the Arabic language at the Caspian region during the first half of the 13th century. The Zaidi Shi'ites were the closest rivals of the Ismailis in northern Iran and had prolonged military confrontations with them in the Caspian region, had launched their own anti-Ismaili literary campaign. This tends to reveal that these Arabian sources had referred to the Iranian Ismailis under the misnomer prevalent in their region for the Syrian Ismailis.

Hashish or *Hashisha* is the Arabic word for hemp, which is latinized *cannabis sativa*. Its variety is Indian hemp or Cannabis Indica, have been known and used in the Near East since ancient times as a drug with intoxicating effects. The earliest express mention of the word *hashish* contained in **at-Tadhkirah fi'l Khilaf** by Abu Ishaq ash-Shirazi (d. 476/1083). The use of *hashish* grew in Syria, Egypt and other Muslim countries during 12th and 13th centuries among the inferior strata of society. Numerous tracts were compiled by Muslim authors, describing that the use of *hashish* would effect on the users' morality and religion. Consequently, the users of *hashish* qualified for a inferior social and moral status, similarly to that of a *mulhida*, or heretic in religion. Neither the Ismailis of Syria nor the contemporary non-Ismaili Muslim texts, which were rigorous towards the Ismailis, ever attested to the use of *hashish* among the Nizari Ismailis.

Hashish, a narcotic drug was a common usage in the Sufic orbits in Damascus since 11th century, and they were subjected to the hatred of the theologians. Franz Rosenthal writes in **The Herb: Hashish versus Medieval Muslim Society** (Leiden, 1971, p. 53) that, "The use of *hashish* by Sufi fraternities and their presumably large role in the spread of *hashish* use can be accepted as a fact in view of all the later evidence pointing in this direction." The Sufi initiates were called *Hashishiyya*, and it was commonly known among them as *Hashish al-Fuqara* (the herb of the fakirs). Among them, the other titles for *hashish* were "digester of food" (*hadim al-aqwat*), "rouser of thought" (*baithat al-fikr*), "queen of insanity" (*sultanat al-junun*), "the green one" (*al-akhdar*), "daughter of cannabis" (*ibnat al-qunbus*) etc.

Nuruddin Ali bin al-Jazzar writes in his **Qam al-Washin fi dhamm al-barrashin** (comp. before 991/1583) that the accursed *hashish* "was originated by some group around the five hundreds" (*ahdathaha ba'd fi'ah fi nahw qarn al-khams mi'ah*). According to Franz Rosenthal, "The word *fi'ah* (group) is used here for the sake of the rhyme and thus may very well mean Sufis, rather than sectarians or soldiers."(Ibid. pp. 53-4) Thus, it seems possible that *hashish* had been discovered around 500/1106 by the wandering Sufis, who qualified the title of *mulhida*, or heretic in religion, and the term *Hashishiyya* became a common abuse in the society. Az-Zarkashi (745-794/1344-1392) in **Zahr al-arish fi ahkam al-hashish** and al-Ukbari (d. 690/1291) in **Kitab as-Sawanih** however write that it was believed that a Sufi Shaikh Hyder (d. 618/1221), the founder of Hyderi Sufi Order, discovered *hashish* in the province of Nishabur around the year 550/1155. This seems almost imponderable version. Franz Rosenthal writes in this context that, "The use of the drug became common among Haydar's followers only years after his death.

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Therefore, the Khurasanians ascribed the introduction of the drug to him who was completely innocent of it." (Ibid. p. 45) Others also connected the introduction of *hashish* with a certain Sufi Ahmad as-Sawaja. In sum, *hashish* seems to have been discovered by the Sufis around 500/1106, but its propaganda to use and the special way of preparing it to use was introduced by the followers of Shaikh Hyder after his death. The Turkish poet, Fuzuli (885-963/1480-1556) writes in his poem, **Layla Megnun** (p. 167) that, "*Hashish* can claim to be the friend of dervishes and to be available in the corner of every mosque and among all kinds of scholars." *Hashish* also enjoyed particular favour in the Sufic poems, such as Ibn Kathir (13:314) quotes the following verses:-

Hashish contains the meaning of my desire.
You dear people of intelligence and understanding.
They have declared it forbidden without any justification on the basis of reason and tradition.
Declaring forbidden what is not forbidden is forbidden.

Al-Badri quotes a poem of a certain Muhammad bin Makki bin Ali bin al-Hussain al-Mashhadi, which reads:-

The use of *hashish* is censured by all silly persons, weak of mind, insensitive,
To the censure coming from stupid and envious individuals.
Share *hashish* with a goodly young man firm.
In the preservation of friendship and appointments.
Is it not a relaxation for the mind? Thus enjoy
It, all you sensible men!

Consequently, the Sufis using *hashish* had been rigorously condemned. Ibn ash-Shihnah (d. 815/1412) composed a couple of verses that:-

I am surprised to find a Shaikh who commands people to be pious.
But himself never heeds the Merciful One or shows piety towards Him.
He considers it permissible to eat *hashish* as well as usury. And (says that) he who studies truly the Sahih (Bukhari) is a heretic.

The Muslim jurists also condemned the use of *hashish* and demanded severe punishment, declaring it dangerous to Islam and society. Gradually, the word *Hashishiyya* became an abusive term mostly in Syria. One who was hated, he was branded as *Hashishiyya* in the society, and thus, the Syrian Ismailis were also lebelled with the same misnomer by their enemies.

Running parallel with this, it is worth keeping in mind that the Syrian Ismailis too called themselves as *al-sufat* (the pure, or sincere), resembling the term *sufi*. According to **Bustan al-Jami** (comp. 561/1165), the Ismailis in Syria called themselves as *al-Sufat*. Ibn al-Azim (d. 660/1262) however writes in his **Zubdat al-Halab** (comp. 641/1243) that a faction of the Syrian Ismailis at Jabal as-Summuq called themselves *al-Sufat*. Ismailism and Sufism are similar in their esoteric practice, but it should be known that, every Ismaili is a Sufi, but no every Sufi is an Ismaili. Ismailism is an esoteric *tariqah* as well as a social system with its own rules and characteristics, while Sufism is an individual concern. The Ismailis however never allowed themselves to be submerged totally into the general esoteric medley, and their form of Sufism remained quite distinctive from other mystical orders of Islam. The Ismailis were the main target of the Sunni Muslims, who used all misnomers and abusive words to discredit them. Incorporating the Ismailis with the Sufis due to their potential affinity, the Sunni Muslims and others had designated the Ismailis too with the same term. Franz Rosenthal writes, "It is worthy of note that attacks on the Ismailiyah accusing them of being *hashish* eaters were apparently not made very often, although this would have been an effective verbal slur." (op. cit., p. 43) Paul Johnson writes in his **Civilizations of the Holy Land** (London, 1979, p. 211) that, "Much nonsense has been written about this sect, which had nothing to do with *hashish*." Curiously enough, the term seems to have become so specific for the Syrian Ismailis that the Sufi circles using *hashish* had been ignored to be designated alike. After the schism of Nizari and Musta'lian, the influence of the Musta'lians in Syria was less than the Nizaris, and therefore, the Musta'lian

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faction also shifted this misnomer on the rival group. It is not surprising that when people cannot find the solution of a difficulty in the natural manner, they concoct a supernatural explanation, just as when they like or dislike a thing, they go to extremes, invent and contrive superstitious tales and give vent to credulous stories tinged with different misnomers.

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The Musta'lian group was designated by the Nizari Ismailis in Syria as *Jamat al-Amiriyya*, and the latter were lebelled by the former as *Jamat al-Hashishiyya* as the Musta'lian group did not like that the rival group be known as *Jamat al-Nizaria*. Soon afterwards, the Musta'lian group disappeared almost from Syria in 524/1130, but they left behind the name *Hashishiyya* in their sources, and thus, it became a general usage for the Nizari Ismailis in Syria since 517/1123.

The occidental chroniclers, travellers and envoys to the Latin East borrowed the term *Hashishiyya* for the Ismailis of Syria, whom they pronounced as *Hashishin, Heyssessini* or *Haisasins*. Silvestre de Sacy delivered a lecture entitled **Memoirs on the Dynasty of the Assassins and the origin of their Name** on May 19, 1809 in the Institute of France, which was a landmark in the relative study. In addition to the few oriental sources published or referred by previous scholars, de Sacy was able to draw on the rich Paris collection of Arabic manuscripts, and states that, "Nor should there be any doubt, in my opinion, that the word *hashishi*, plural *hashishin*, is the origin of the corruption *heissessini, assassini*, and *assissini*. It should not surprise us that the Arabic *shin* was transcribed by all our writers who used the Latin language by an *s*, and in the Greek historians by a sigma. They had no choice. It should, moreover be observed that the *shin* is pronounced less strongly than *ch* in French. What can rightly be asked is the reason why the Ismailis or *Batinis* were called *Hashishis*."

After picking up the word *Hashishiyya* for the Syrian Ismailis, the Crusaders attested further fabrications. The daring behavior of the Ismaili *fidais*, who usually carried their mission - a struggle for survival, had exceedingly impressed the Crusaders, who would rarely endanger their own lives for other than worldly rewards. The Crusaders failed to compete with the valour of the Ismaili *fidais*, therefore, they propagated that they were using *hashish* before fighting, but they forgot to understand that the drunkenness caused by *hashish* merely consists of a kind of quiet ecstasy, rather than a vehemence apt to fire the courage to undertake and carry out daring and dangerous missions. Franz Rosenthal writes in **The Herb: Hashish versus Medieval Muslim Society** (Leiden, 1971, pp. 42-3) that, "It has been pointed out that *hashish* does not have the properties that would ordinarily make it a serviceable stimulant for anyone being sent on a dangerous mission of assassination." The editors of **Encyclopaedia Britannica** (New York, 1978, p. 94) write that, "Stories of the terrorists' use of *hashish* before setting out to commit murder and face martyrdom are doubtful." Neal Robinson writes in **Islam – A Concise Introduction** (Surrey, 1999, p. 169) that, "Although there is no evidence that the Nizaris used narcotics, their Sunni opponents gave them the abusive nickname, *Hashishiyyin* (*hashish* users), which passed into English as Assassins." Bosworth also writes in **The Islamic Dynasties** (cf. **Islamic Survey**, series no. 5, Edinburgh, 1967, p. 128) that, "The story related by Marco Polo and others, that hallucinatory drugs were used to stimulate the assassins to bolder efforts is unconfirmed in any of the genuine Ismaili sources." The Muslim authors, unlike the western authors, did not fantasize about the real spirit of sacrifice of the *fidais* in defending their faith around aggressive milieu. Instead of knowing their struggle, they branded them with the then prevalent abusive term, *Hashishiyya*. Hence, the misnomer *Hashishiyya*, picked up by the Crusaders in the beginning of the second half of the 12th century, mainly through oral channels, came to be pronounced as *Hashishin, Heyssessini* or *Haisasins*. It further underwent corruptions, and evolved as *Axasin, Accini, Assassini, Assacis, Ashishin, Assassini*, and finally resulted the modern genesis of the English word, *Assassin*. It later was coloured by spurious and extravagant fables, smacking exaggeration in western popular lore and literature.

It deserves notice, however, that Henry, Count of Champagne (d. 593/1197) had visited the Syrian Ismaili territories in 590/1194, where he had personally alleged to have witnessed the falling down of the two Ismaili *fidais* from a lofty turret upon the signal of the Ismaili leader to demonstrate an example of obedience. This event became famous in the occidental sources bluntly by the end of 13th century without perception of the spirit of sacrifice of the *fidais*. Thus, in

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the West, the Ismailis have been the subjects of several hotchpotch of legends, and were portrayed in different terms, so as to designate them ultimately as *Assassins*.

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APPENDIX IV

LEGEND OF PARADISE IN ALAMUT

Examining a critical and analytical approach of the sources, it is almost possible to clarify that the fortress of Alamut was situated in rocky and infertile region, and its physical condition during occupation was very much rough and coarse. It was embosomed with swamps and muddy tracts, accounting unhealthy atmosphere. Hasan bin Sabbah immediately embarked on the task of renovating the castle, which was in great need of repairs, improving its fortifications, storage facilities and water supply sources. He also improved and extended the system of irrigation and cultivation of crops in the Alamut, where many trees were planted. Thus, a fertile spot emerged out, tending an eye-catching scene in the barren ranges of Elburz mountain. The fertile tracts of the valley radically began to appear as if an oasis in the desert.

Whenever, the Alamut was threatened, the enemies had to come from Ispahan to Rudhbar after passing through the tedious and barren regions, and pitched their camps at the pastures of Alamut. While retreating, the frustrated forces took their revenge by mutilating and cutting down the luxuriant crops and devastated the smiling fields in order to quench the thirst of hatred and passion. Their temper was also crystallized into romantic stories. Firstly, it was rumoured that the valley of Alamut had been transformed into the gardens of paradise, but it proved an ineffectual among the local people. Instead, the enemies contrived another florid story that so-called paradise existed inside the fortress. Since it was difficult to ascertain the story by the local people, it received a less credence in some quarters, whose bits and shreds were sorted out by the later writers to embellish a tale in exaggeration. Thus, the failure to eliminate the Ismailis, begot in its turn the idea of myths and tales. Round a trifling thing has thus grown up a crop of fables, making it a curious hodgepodge. According to **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics** (London, 1958, 2:140), "Hasan bin Sabbah caused the land surrounding his fortress to be carefully cultivated, and this may have led to the legend of paradise." It was the Venetian traveller Marco Polo (1254-1324) to have heard from the villagers and narrated in his book. He was accompanied by his father and uncle and embarked on his journey to the court of Kubilai Khan (1260-1294). Macro Polo started from Acre in 1271, and passed through Iran in 1272, about 15 years after the reduction of Alamut when it was almost a heap of ruins. He committed his itinerary to writing through a scribe in 1298 and related what he had heard in Iran concerning the tale of paradise in Alamut. His ridiculous account however cannot be credible. It is inferred that he would have never crossed near the ruins of Alamut, and the description of the castle in Marco Polo's book was either the stronghold of Girdkuh near Damghan, which was finally surrendered to the Mongols in 1270, about two years before he crossed Khorasan into northern Afghanistan; or, more probably, some fortress in eastern Kohistan. There he evidently had seen a ruined castle of the Ismailis. His itinerary however did not take him to Alamut, which appears to be the castle alluded to in his account. He had heard from some local informants, which he admitted in the beginning, and therefore, his account is admittedly not based on personal observation. It also cannot be denied that Marco Polo's account bears a distinctly occidental imprint, reflecting the influences of different reports, which are ultimately traceable to Burchard of Strassburg, Arnold of Lubeck and James of Vitry. It is therefore possible that Marco Polo had knowingly conflated the information he had acquired some 30 years earlier in Iran, with the legends then prevalent in Europe for the Ismailis of Syria. All this sounds to the conclusion that Marco Polo could not have heard his account in its entirety from his informants in Iran.

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Marco Polo applied the term *Ashishin* (or *Assassin*) for the Ismailis. It has been asserted that the term *Assassin* had originally acquired currency in Crusader circles in reference to the Ismailis of Syria, and it was neither originated or prevalent in Iran, and therefore, Marco Polo could not have heard the term Assassins from his informants in Iran. His curious application of the title of Old Man of the Mountain (*Vetus de Mountain, or Viel de la Montaigne*) to the ruler of Alamut; also suggests a doubtful description. This title has been coined by the Crusaders for the chief of the Ismailis of Syria, and it was never in usage among the Ismailis of Iran. It is therefore, safe to infer that Marco Polo would have never heard the title of Old Man of the Mountain in Iran, but he used in the light of the then informations prevalent in Europe for the Syrian Ismailis. It will be interesting on this juncture to quote the description of Marco Polo about the secret garden of paradise. He narrates:-

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"So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahomet gave of his paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. He kept at his court a number of the youths of the country, from 12 to 20 years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about paradise, just as Mahomet had be wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahomet.. The prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from paradise! and that it was exactly such as Mahomet had described it in the law."

It is important to note that it was the tendency of the occidental sources to propagate that the Koran was not a heavenly revealed book, but it was designed by the Prophet, and whatever the misconception of Islam was popular in Europe at that time, is evidently echoing in the narration of Marco Polo. It gives further gravity to the conclusion that Marco Polo could not have heard such tendency from his Iranian informants. Peter de Venerable (1094-1156) had the Holy Koran translated for the first time from Arabic into Latin. Peter de Cluny (d. 551/1156) and Robert of Ketton also produced the Latin translation of the Koran in 538/1143, and it was followed by the translation of Mark of Toledo (1190-1200) under the title of **Alcorani Machomati Liber**. Joinville and Pedro de Alfonso and other followed them in the 12th century, had dwelled polemically on the hedonistic delights of the Islamic garden of paradise. Pedro de Alfonso's account became much popular, and was treated, according to **Islam and the West** (Edinburgh, 1960, p. 148) by Norman Daniel, "the standard mediaeval version of the Quran's promised paradise, that is, a garden of delights, the flowing waters, the mild air in which neither heat nor cold could afflict, the shady trees, the fruits, the many-coloured silken clothing and the palaces of precious stones and metals, the milk and wine served in gold and silver vessels by angels, saying, `eat and drink in joy'; and beautiful virgins, `untouched by men or demons'." Norman Daniel also adds, "In spite of the enormous influence of the "Liber Scalae", it must be said that the Quran itself was the chief source of the picture of the Islamic paradise familiar to so many mediaeval writers." (Ibid.)

The most famous writers in Europe who produced a colourful tale of the Islamic garden of paradise were Pedro de Alfonso, San Pedro, Marino Sanudo, Varagine, Higden, Simon Simeon, Ricoldo da Monte Croce, William of Tripoli, John Mandeville, Jacques de Vitry, Alan of Lille, Sigebert, Guido, etc. In time, the European conceptions of the Islamic paradise, based on the Koranic description in a literal sense, were incorporated into the alleged paradise of Alamut, culminating in Marco Polo's detailed account to this effect. Norman Daniel further writes, "It must be said that it was usual for Christians to allow themselves a rather purple rendering of the gardens and precious metals of paradise, though usually not of the virgins so beloved of later romanticism." (Ibid.)

Thus, Marco Polo enhanced a further lease of life to the anti-Ismaili propaganda in Europe. Later on, the account of Friar Odoric of Pordenous (d. 731/1331), who visited China during 1323-27, is perhaps the earliest occidental account of the Ismailis, based entirely on Marco Polo, on his homeland journey to Italy in 1328. Odoric passed through the Caspian coast land in northern Iran, and heard there about the Ismailis, but his description almost resembles the account of Marco Polo. Charles E. Nowell writes in **The Old Man of the Mountain** (cf. **Speculum**, Mass.,

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October, 1947, 12:517-8) that, "It is easy to understand how some parts of the Marco-Odoric legend were started. Various eastern historians say that the original Old Man, Hasan Sabbah, for purely economic and strategic reasons, had conduits built and encouraged planting around Alamut. This gave rise to the stories of the garden and the fountains of wine, milk and honey."

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Mirza Muhammad Saeed Dehlvi writes in **Mazhab aur Batini Talim** (Lahore, 1935, pp.296-7) that, "Whenever, the villagers looked the view of the beautiful gardens, green fields and heaths from the surrounding walls of Alamut, they thought it a model of a paradise of the Nizari Ismailis on the ranges of mountain. It is possible that the legend of paradise must have been originated by the illiterate and narrow-minded villagers from whom Marco Polo had heard and recorded it during his journey."

It is also a striking feature that not a single Muslim source, notably Ata Malik Juvaini had ever mentioned about the legend of paradise, who was very aggressive in his narratives and was in search of such stories against the Ismailis. Marshall Hodgson writes in **The Order of the Assassins** (Netherland, 1955, p.135) that, "Juvaini, when investigating the history of Alamut on the spot after its fall did not look for such a garden as Polo heard tell of."

The modern scholars express great doubts as to the historicity of the stories of paradise narrated by Marco Polo. Carl Brockelmann writes in **History of the Islamic Peoples** (London, 1959, p. 179) that, "What the Venetian world traveller Marco Polo reported, who some two hundred years later (1271 or 1272) passed through the territory of Alamut, may be mere a legend." Dr. Abbas Hamadani writes in **The Fatimids** (Karachi 1962, pp. 50-51) that, "A myth was circulated in much later times to the effect that Hasan used to give hashish, an intoxicating drug, to his followers, and in their state of unconsciousness they were transferred to a false paradise. The legend of paradise was circulated by the European traveller Marco Polo, and it is obviously false." Athar Abbas Rizvi writes in **Iran - Royalty, Religion and Revolution** (Canberra, 1980, p. 72) that, "The romantic stories of the order of assassins and of the Old Man of the Mountain are familiar to Western readers through the pages of Marco Polo, but the legends surrounding events in Alamut, although fascinating, are far from truth." According to **The Arabs** (by the editors of **Encyclopaedia Britannica**, New York, 1978, p. 94) that, "Stories of the terrorists' use of hashish before setting out to commit murder and face martyrdom are doubtful, and there is no Ismaili source to confirm tales of an artificial paradise into which drugged members were taken as a foretaste of eternal bliss." Duncan Forbes also writes in **The Heart of Iran** (London, 1963, p. 29) that, "It is difficult to believe that the Alamut valley, austere and rocky as it is today, ever contained the delicate gardens described in the Middle Ages." Lastly, in falsifying the tale of paradise, William Marsdon writes in **The Travels of Marco Polo** (London, 1818, p. 117) that, "We may affect to smile at his (Macro Polo's) credulity."

It must be borne in mind that a less informed Ismaili historian, called Dehkhoda Abdul Malik bin Ali, who was appointed the commander of the fortress, later on became known as the Maimundiz in Rabi I, 520/April, 1126; gives few important details under the year 536/1142, as cited by Rashiduddin's **Jamiut Tawarikh** (Tehran, 1959, pp. 149-163), and Abul Kassim Kashani's **Zubdat al-Tawarikh** (1964, pp. 171-4) that the Khurramiya, a sect of the Kaysania, had greatly borrowed the teachings of the Mazdakites and Zoroastrians. To sum up, by Khurramiya means the whole wide movement which operated through out Iran, with a possible focus in Azerbaijan and Tabaristan. The very meaning of Khurramiya appears uncertain to the authors dealing with it. It is usually related to the meaning of the Iranian term *khurram* (joyful, delightful or pleasing), so as to stigmatize the movement as "licentious" and justify its dependence on Mazdakism, which was considered as too tolerant from the point of view of ethics. This dependence, however, was occasionally related to Mazdak's wife, Khurrama, held to have given her name to Mazdak's followers after his death. There is also a geographical explanation of the name from a village, called *khurram*, which is the least likely interpretation.

It appears that most of the followers of Khurramiya espoused Ismailism in Jabal al-Badain at Azerbaijan, and asserted that: "this is the true faith, we accept it." Hasan bin Sabbah deputed Dehkhoda Kaykhosrow, who had formerly belonged to them; to teach them the true Ismaili

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doctrines. When the latter died in Muharram, 513/May, 1119, his sons Abul Ala and Yousuf took his place as their *da'is*. Both were greedy of wealth and power, and in pursuit, they neglected their newly faith of Ismailism. Hasan bin Sabbah exhorted and warned them, but to no avail. After Hasan bin Sabbah's death in 518/1124, a weaver named Budayl arose among them, and renounced Ismaili faith. He taught his followers that: "The law of the *Shariah* is only for those adhering to the exterior of religion. There is no reality to what is declared lawful or forbidden in religion. Prayers and fasting must therefore be abandoned." Curiously, Budayl also taught them that: "Women were the water of the house. Dowry and marriage contract had no meaning. Daughters were lawful for their fathers and brothers." Hence, they thought all forbidden things licit, and believed that the paradise and hell were on earth and that every one who recognizes the divinity of Abul Ala and Yousuf would return to earth in human shape, while those failing to do so would return in the form of wild beasts. In sum, these were the people whose doctrines consisted in rolling up the carpet of obligations of the *Shariah*, so as to render men free to follow all their pleasures and passions in permitting freedom of sexual relations and declaring as permitted all sorts of things prohibited by the religious laws.

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When these became erroneously known publicly as the teachings of Hasan bin Sabbah, the Ismailis seized some of the heretics. Abul Ala and Yousuf then were apprehended on 9th Rabi II, 537/October 31, 1142 during the period of Imam al-Mohtadi, and were scourged to death. Within a year, the rest of the heretics were searched and executed.

It would be therefore, absurd to believe that the doctrines of the Khurramiya sect, whose one group embraced Ismailism and then reverted to their former cults; may be attributed to the teachings of Hasan bin Sabbah. It is a landmark point worth consideration that the aggressive sources have blindly mixed up the doctrines of the Khurrarmiya sect with the teachings of the Ismailis and their baseless and capricious narratives were used to discredit the Ismailis.

APPENDIX V

ADMISSION OF WOMEN IN THE MOSQUE

The status of women in Islam, especially with regards to such issues as marriage, inheritance, veiling and seclusion has received a great deal of scholarly attention. For women, the mosque meant access to almost every aspect of public life. Debarring or limiting their access means restricting their participation in public life. Gender segregation, as seen in most mosques today, is such a limitation, for it limits women's full access. This both hampers their participation and can even shut them out completely. Segregation can be implemented either through a screen or a wall, or by distance, as happens when placing women behind men during the congregational prayers.

Little has been written however on gender segregation in the mosque. One should perhaps mention Nimat Hafez Barazangi, who has expressed the need for women to frequent mosques in her **Muslim Women's Islamic Higher Learning as a Human Right: The Action Plan**" (vide **Muslim Women and the Politics of Participation**, ed. Mahnaz Afkhami and Erika Friedl, Syracuse University Press, 1997, pp. 56-7). Other works include Nabia Abbott's **Women and the State in Early Islam** (vide *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, No. 1, 1942, pp. 114-5), which provides useful historical perspective on this issue. The write-up of Nevin Reda entitled, **Women in the Mosque: Historical Perspectives on Segregation** (vide, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 2:2, Nov., 2004, pp. 77-97) is also an excellent contribution in this context. Also noteworthy is the work of two Islamic scholars, the first being al-Ghazali, who advocated a better position for women, vide **Min Huna Na'lam** (Cairo, 1968, 5:185-195) and **Turathuna al-Fikri fi Mizan al-Shar wa al-Aql** (Cairo, 1991, 00. 158-168). He severely criticized the widespread exclusion of women from the mosque and defended their right to

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participate. The second one is Ahmad Shawqi al-Fanjari, who specifically addressed segregation in his **al-Ikhtilat fi al-Din fi al-Tarikh fi Ilm al-Ijtima** (Cairo, 1987, pp. 42-46). He promoted non-segregation and women's participation in public life, including the mosque.

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The Koran provides interesting evidence for women's access to the mosque during the Prophet's period. It can be gleaned from the minute examination of two kinds of verses. The first kind consists of general verses that deal more or less with all Muslims. They are in the male plural, which, in Arabic, can include women. On the other hand, the female plural does not include men. The second kind is gender-specific and specifies women, either by the female plural or by referring to a specific person. All Muslims are asked to pray in every mosque and to take their adornments: "Say: My Lord has commanded justice and that you look toward (Him) at every mosque" (7:29) and "O children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel (*zinat*) at every time and when attending the mosque" (7:31). The "children of Adam" denotes the humankind comprises of male and female. Several verses talk negatively of those who prevent believers from mosques and warn them of severe punishment (2:114, 8:34, 22:25 and 48:25).

"Who is more unjust than one who prevents (believers) from celebrating God's name in his mosques and strives to ruin them? It is not fitting that such should enter them, except in fear. Disgrace will be theirs in this world and an exceeding torment in the world to come" (2:114) and "The mosques of God shall be visited by one who believes in God and the last day, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate and fears none but God" (9:18).

The above verses indicate the right and obligation of every Muslim to participate in the mosque's activities. The context suggests that this applies to "the believers" regardless of gender. The participation of women is not stated explicitly, it is however clearer in the gender-specific verses. When the Koran refers to man, the Arabic word usually used is *insan* or *bashar*. Both of these terms mean *human being*, and not the male sex, and therefore all of the injunctions in the Koran addressing *man* are in fact addressed to "men and women" alike. Ibn Hajr (d. 852/1449) writes that once Umm Salama was having her hair combed when she heard the sermons starting in the mosque. The Prophet began with the words, "O'people…." On hearing this she told the woman who was combing her hair to braid it just as it was. The woman asked her why she was such hurry. Umm Salama replied, "Are we not counted among "people?" And so saying, she promptly braided her hair and went to the corner of the mosque and listened to the sermon (vide **Fath al-Bari fi Sharh al-Bukhari**, 2:284).

Tirmizi relates that Umm Ammarah, an Ansari woman once came to the Prophet and asked about the Koran, why it addressed only men when women, too, accepted God and His Prophet. The question occasioned the revelation of the Koranic verses explicitly addressing women as well as men: "For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true (truthful) men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in God's praise, for them has God prepared forgiveness and a great reward" (33:35). It is a response that unequivocally shows Prophet's readiness to hear women, and thereafter, the Koran explicitly addressed women a number of times. Syed Qutb writes in **Fi Dhilal al-Koran** (Beirut, p. 2863) that, "In above verses men and women are both mentioned together. This is one of many different aspects in which Islam honours women and establishes their dignity. These verses are also a confirmation that men and women are equal in terms of their relationship with their Creator, in worship, religious obligations and moral conduct."

Another two verses specify women's relationship to group prayers. The first is as follows: "The male believers and the female believers are each others' allies. They enjoin good and forbid evil, establish prayer and pay the alms, and obey God and His Prophet. Upon these God will have mercy" (9:71). It signifies togetherness in prayers as well as in enjoining good, forbidding evil, giving alms, and obeying God and His Prophet. These activities clearly have a public aspect to their fulfillment and are mandated for both men and women.

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The second gender-specific verse is addressed to Mary as follows: "O Mary! Humble yourself before your Lord, prostrate yourself, and bow down with those who bow down" (3:43). The phrase *ma'a al-raki'in* means *with those who bow down*. The word *raki'in* is the masculine plural form. It may or may not include women, but it must include men. The feminine plural would have been *raki'at*, which is not used in this context. Thus, Mary is ordered to pray with a group that includes men. Also interesting is the preposition *ma'a*, which means *with* not *behind, away from* or *segregated from* in any way. Mary's presence in what could possibly have been the Masjid al-Aqsa may have significant implications for female access to mosques. Besides, Mary's connection with the temple began before her birth. Her mother is portrayed as saying: "My Lord! I have consecrated by vow (*nazartu*) to you what is inside my womb as a freed persons (*muharraran*)" (3:35). The word *nazr* means *to make a vow* or *to dedicate oneself to a deity* or *to live as a nazirite*. It implied that Mary's mother was promising her unborn child would be a nazirite, part of the temple's personnel, and thus Mary's example is a significant aspect of understanding the Koran's position on women's access to sacred space.

The sanctuary of the Sacred Mosque in Mecca has its origins in the pre-Islamic period, continued and flourished after the advent of Islam. It features an ancient house. During the Prophet's early activity in Mecca, its condition was more or less a continuation of pagan practices. The women made *tawaf*, sacrificed their animals, and the Qoraishi women performed *sa'y*. After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet retained some of the pre-Islamic rituals, such as *tawaf* and *sa'y*, but other were changed. Women's access to every part of the Sacred Mosque continued unchanged from *jahili* times. Even today, women have complete access to the mosque and can pray wherever and whenever they like.

The Prophet built a second mosque after migrating to Medina. Its structure, which also functioned as his home, was simple nearly square enclosure of approximately 56x53 meters with a single entrance. The *qibla* side had a double range of palm-trunk columns thatched with palm leaves. The prayers were conducted in the vast empty courtyard. Significantly, there appear to have been no walls or other barriers separating men and women, or any other known material evidence of gender segregation during the Medina period. It was not only a place for prayer, but a center for many other activities as well. It functioned as the school where people learned their religion, and the parliament where the community discussed new laws and affairs of the state. It was also a courthouse where judgments were passed, and the community center where families met their friends and neighbours, and held their celebrations. In short, it was the hub and center of public life for the emerging Muslim nation.

A'isha narrates that the women used to be present at the morning prayer in the mosque, which was said at an hour so early that they returned to their houses while it was still dark. (**Bukhari**, 8:13). Yet another tradition indicates that when the Prophet had finished his prayers, he used to stay a little and did not rise until the women had left the mosque. (Ibid, 1:152). According to another tradition, on certain night the Prophet was very late in coming out to lead the night prayers, when the people had assembled in the mosque; and he came only on hearing Umar call out, "The women and the children are going to sleep." (Ibid, 9:22). It is also narrated that even the women who had children to suckle would come to the mosque, and that when the Prophet heard a baby crying, he would shorten his prayer lest the mother should feel inconvenience." (Ibid, 10:65)

The above traditions afford overwhelming evidence of the fact that the women just in the same way as men used to frequent the mosques and that there was no least restriction for their admission. There are few more hadiths, which indicate that the Prophet had given orders not to prohibit women from going to the mosques. One tradition makes the Prophet as saying, "Do not prohibit the handmaids of God from going to the mosques of God." (**Bukhari,** 11:12). Besides, the Prophet is reported to have said that if a woman wanted to go to the mosque at night, she should not be prohibited from doing so." (Ibid, 10:162). The words of one another tradition is more general that, "When the wife of one of you asks permission to go out, she should not be prohibited from doing so." (Ibid, 10:166). Ibn Majah quotes Ibn Abbas as narrating that the Prophet took his daughters and wives to the Eid congregations.

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Umm Waraqah bint Abdullah bin al-Harith Ansari had collected the Koran, and the Prophet commanded her to lead the people of her area (*dar*) in prayer. She had her own *mu'azin,* and she used to lead the people of her area, vide **Bulugh al-Amani** (5, 3:1375) by al-Banna. The apparent meaning included the *mu'azin* (a man who calls to prayer), a *ghulam* (a male slave), and *a jariyah* (a female slave).

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Atiqa bint Zaid (d. 672), the wife of caliph Umar used to go to the mosque for prayer and listening to the sermons recited by Umar himself. According to **Muwatta**, Umar did not like his wife to go to the mosque, but could not prevent her. And she continued to going to the mosque and used to say, "By God! I will go to the mosque till I am forbidden in clear words." As the Prophet had permitted them, Umar did not like to restrict them by force of law.

According to the **Sunan** (2:58) of Abu Daud, a woman is also spoken of as acting as an *imam* (prayer leader) while men followed her." It is also narrated by Reet Hanafiya that A'isha led us in obligatory prayer and stood among the women in the middle of row (**Ibn Hazm**, 3:126). According to **al-Isti'ab fi Asma al-Ashab**, Sa'dah bint Qammamah used to lead prayers of women. Umm Salama also led the prayers of women in the month of Ramzan.

Umm Humayd liked to pray with the Prophet in his mosque, but he told her that, "I know you like to pray with me, but your praying in your home (*baytiki*) is better for you than your praying in your house (*hujratiki*), and your praying in your house is better for you than your praying in your area (*dariki*), and your praying in your area is better for you than your praying in the mosque of your tribe (*masjid qawmiki*), and your praying in the mosque of your tribe is better for you than your praying in my mosque" (**Bulugh al-Amani**, 5,2:1337). So she commanded that a mosque be built for her in the furthest and darkest corner of her home (*bayt*), and she used to pray there until she died. This tradition appears to outline a hierarchy of prayer areas, ranging from the most secluded to the most public.

Afzular Rahman writes in **Role of Muslim Woman in Society** (London, 1986, p. 67) that the Prophet ordained rules in this context and said, "The best place for men is in the front rows, and the worst at the rear, whereas the best place for women is at the rear, and the worst in the front rows." Even the husband and wife or mother were not permitted to stand together. It is reported by Malik bin Anas, "My maternal grandmother, Mulaikah, invited the Prophet to dinner. When the meal was over, the Prophet stood up for prayers. Yatim and I stood behind him and my grandmother stood behind us" (**Tirmizi**). Ibn Abbas also reported a similar tradition: Once the Prophet rose for prayer. I stood beside him and A'isha stood behind us." (**Nisai**)

Ibn Sa'd (5:16-17) writes that Umar ordered Suleman bin Abi Hathmah to act as a separate imam for the women in the mosque, while men prayed behind another imam. This report records the first time that segregation was instituted in the mosque. Since caliph Umar did not like his wife to go to the mosque, but he could not legitimately deny her access, he chose to implement segregation instead. Thus, he was not prohibiting her, but rather was limiting her access. Umar instituted segregated prayers, appointing a separate *imam* for each sex. He chose a male *imam* for the women, another departure from precedent, for it is known that the Prophet appointed a woman, Umm Waraka, to act as *imam* for her entire household, which included men as well a women (**Tabaqat,** 3:335). Moreover, after Prophet's death, A'isha and Umm Salama acted as *imam* for other women (Ibid. 8:355-56). He finally fixed a separate door of the mosque for use by women, and forbade men to use that door for entrance and exit (**Abu Daud**).

Atiqa bint Zaid was famous for her beauty, intelligence and poetic ability, who also married four men. Her first husband, son of caliph Abu Bakr, died leaving a substantial inheritance on condition that she not remarries. After rejecting numerous suitors, she finally accepted caliph Umar, who was murdered in 644. Then she married Zubayr bin Awwam, on condition that he would not beat her or prevent her from attending prayers at the mosque. He died in battle in 656, so she took her fourth husband.

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Umar also prevented the Prophet's widows from going to the mosque in Mecca when he forbade them to perform pilgrimage. However, he seems to have relented before his death and allowed them to go. Ibn Sa'd (5:17) writes that when caliph Uthman came to power, he once again allowed women to pray together with men, but in a segregated manner: behind the men and held back until the men departed.

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Caliph Uthman (644-56) allowed Prophet's wives to go on pilgrimage and revoked Umar's arrangement for separate imams. Men and women once again attended mosque together, although women now gathered in a separate group and left after the men. (Ibid. 5:17)

There are however different views as to when the practice of admission of women in the mosques continued after the Prophet. "The practice for women to be present in the mosques at the time of prayer seems to have continued long enough after the Prophet's times. Within the mosque they were not separated from men by any screen or curtain; only they formed into a line behind the men" (**Bukhari**, 10:164), and though they were covered decently with an overgarment, they did not wear a veil. On the occasion of the great gathering of the pilgrimage, a woman is expressly forbidden to wear a veil. (**Bukhari**, 25:23). The traditions are explicit to show that the women formed themselves into a back row and the men retained their seats until women went out of mosque. (**al-Muslim**, 4:28).

It implies from the above traditions that no hard and fast rule governed in Islam to restrict women's access to the mosques. H.A.R. Gibb writes in **Mohammedanism** (New York, 1955, p. 55) that, "It seems that at Medina women joined in the congregational prayers, standing in rows behind the men." Alfred Guillaume also writes in **Islam** (1963, p. 69) that, "In the Prophet's time women attended public prayers in the mosque, standing behind the men." Ibn al-Hadjdj records in **Madkhal** (2:54) that, "The business was done in the mosque. Women sit in the mosques and sell thread, in Mecca hawkers even call their wares in the mosque." According to A.M.A. Shushtery, "Arab ladies freely recited their compositions in the assemblies of men. Girl students were permitted to remain unveiled before their teachers. Women were free to go out for shopping, to join prayers and to attend lectures on religion." (**Outlines of Islamic Culture** (Banglore, 1954, p. 513). Leila Ahmed writes in **Women and Gender in Islam** (London, 1992, p. 72) that, "Broadly speaking, the evidence on women in early Muslim society suggests that they characteristically participated in and were expected to participated in the activities that preoccupied their community; those included religion as well as war. Women of the first Muslim community attended mosque, took part in religious services on feast days, and listened to Muhammad's discourses. Nor were they passive, docile followers but were active interlocutors in the domain of faith as they were in other matters. Thus, the hadith narratives show women acting and speaking out of a sense that they were entitled to participate in the life of religious thought and practice, to comment forthrightly on any topic, even the Koran, and to do so in the expectation of having their views heard."

"This practice seems to have existed for a very long time. Thus we read of women calling out *Allahu Akbar* along with men in the mosque during the three days following Eid al-Adha so late at the time of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, the Umayyad caliph, who ruled about the end of the first century." (**Bukhari**, 13:12)

Azraqi writes in **Akhbar al-Mekka** (2:197) that, "In the year 256/870, the governor of Mecca had ropes tied between the columns to make a separate place for the women." Later on, the practice grew up of erecting a wooden barrier in the mosque to form a separate place for women, but by and by the *purdah* conception grew so strong that women were altogether shut out from the mosque.

Nevin Reda writes in **Women in the Mosque: Historical Perspectives on Segregation** that, "By the end of the third Islamic century, the pattern of Islamic society, especially among the higher classes, had changed markedly from what had prevailed during the first period. The system of total segregation and seclusion of women had been instituted, and women no longer had the

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right to participate freely in public life." (cf. **The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences**, 2:2, Nov., 2004, p. 93).

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It however infers from different versions that the attendance of women in the mosques continued long after 256/870. "Until the third century of Hijra, and even later" says Reuben Levy in **The Social Structure of Islam** (1962, p. 126) that, "women enjoyed with men the right to pray in the mosque : Omar is said to have appointed a Koran reader especially for them at public worship. They were not required then to be veiled; but the law-books prescribed the kind of dress to be worn, which consists of at least two pieces – a chemise, and a cloak for the upper part of the head and the body. The face, hands and upper side of the feet need not be covered."

The Moorish traveler Ibn Jubayr travelled Spain to Mecca and back in the years 1183-1185, who found women as well as men gathered together to hear a famous preacher at Baghdad. The women, amongst whom was the caliph's mother, were stationed behind a latticed window in the royal palace, while the general mass of the congregation were assembled in the courtyard below. The preacher, however, knew of the presence of the august lady, for he called down blessings upon her and pronounced an eulogy in which he called her "The Most Noble Veil" and "The Most Compassionate Presence." (vide Ibn Jubayr, **Travels**, ed. by Wright and de Goeje, Leiden, 1907, p. 222)

In the present age, the women offer prayer with men in many places of Iran, Turkey, Indonesia, Western Asia, some countries in Europe and Arab. Reuben Levy (p. 131) further writes that, "Women in Muslim lands still attend prayers at the mosque it is at festival only, although at Mecca they come regularly but are separated by a grill from the men. Further, at Agades, amongst the Tuaregs, while the men pray – presumably in the open – the women stand at one side listening. This is the case also in a good many other places in the realms of Islam."

Asghar Ali Engineer writes in **The Quran, Women and Modern Society** (New Delhi, 1999, p. 9) that, "Today in most of the Muslim societies women are prevented from going to the mosque and where they are permitted to go, they are segregated. In the Prophet's time they used to attend the mosques. Umar, the second caliph, who was rather harsh towards women, both in public and private life, tried to prevent women from attending mosques but failed. He then introduced segregation. Women were supposed to pray behind a male prayer leader and a woman could not lead men in prayer. But the Prophet had permitted, as we find in **Tabaqat** (8:335) by Ibn Sa'd, Umm Waraqah to lead her entire household in prayer which also included male members. In Kaba in Mecca during hajj men as well as women pray together."

No doubt, the original practice of Islam to offer prayer by men and women in the prayer-halls is virtually continued in the Shi'a Imami Ismaili *tariqah*. Syed M.H. Zaidi writes in "**The Muslim Womanhood in Revolution**" (Calcutta, 1935, p. 132) that, "Ismaili women attend social functions and assembly of men, they say their prayers in the Jamatkhanas at the same time with men as was done in the days of the Holy Prophet, and long after under his successors."

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah gave a most important message of **"Importance of Women"** to the women in Pakistan, which is given below:-

"I do not think you realize yourselves and I am sorry to say, certainly the men of Pakistan and a few other Muslim countries do not realize the importance of women taking an equal rank with men in the welfare, in the Government and in the general activity and prosperity of the country. Only the other day, the Minister of Wakfs, one of the leading *ulema* of Egypt responsible for religious affairs, was telling me that a country is like a human body – men and women are two lungs – if you reduce the power of women, you crush them with inhibitions and imaginary restrictions based ultimately on man's superior physical power, in a nation, it is exactly like a human being who has one lung perforated by tuberculosis and only one lung to work. Ladies believe me, if Pakistan does not rise to the modern idea of the equal position of women, you will find not only Europe but all the other countries of Asia going ahead of you. I am heartbroken when I see how little so many of our men realize what it is, and how little the women contribute,

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compared to what they could contribute to the moral and material happiness and prosperity of the country. To begin with, the women here, to my horror, are forbidden taking part in the religious life of the country. In practically, every Muslim country the women are allowed to go to mosques for Friday prayers and there are proper wings divided by *purdah* from the men where they conduct Friday prayers. Perhaps the greatest blot in Pakistan is the neglect of Friday prayers by Muslims generally, but above all, not giving women occasions for participating in these most important prayers. If you are forbidden even prayer what can you expect? The first thing to agitate for, is to get your right for your prayers, which women enjoy in practically every Muslim country. In Cairo, there are special mosques, like the Mohammedali Mosque, where galleries are reserved for women. In North Africa, in the Paris Mosque and the London Mosque at Woking, in Iran and in Turkey, women have their own special place for Friday prayers. When you do not allow the women to pray, how can you expect them to do any lay service for the country. First of all you must win the right to prayers, then win your right to equality in production, industrial service and in office work. I am an old man and I can expect very little in this world but my message to you women is : organize yourselves, resist and fight for your rights. On last word, some of our champions of inhibitions fear that liberty will lead to sexual immorality. Believe me, when women from childhood and adolescence have seen men, then there is very little likelihood of that, except in naturally bad characters who will be bad always under any conditions, either of freedom or restrictions. I have lived in most European and American countries, and I have no hesitation in saying that only one out of 1,000 families is broken up by sexual misdemeanour and the other 999 go through happy life bringing up children, living perfectly moral lives in which little thought is given to sexual relations and the whole life is taken up for service to the children, to the family, to the husband and to the country. My dear Muslim sisters – one result of this is that some of your men who lock up their women, when they go to Paris, rush to indulge in their horrible instincts and for that go to places where (like in every great city, even in Muslim countries) there are prostitutes and shows for encouraging sexual depravity. But that is not life of the people. The overwhelming life of the people is happy family relations and far more devotion to children than you can possibly get out of *purdah nashin*. Oh my sisters, agitate. Leave no peace to the men till they give you religious freedom by opening mosques for prayers not side by side with men but in reserved quarters attached to all the mosques, so that the habit of praying in public and self respect and self-confidence becomes general amongst women. On that foundation of religious equality, you can then build social, economic, patriotic and political equality with men. I pray Allah Almighty to open the eyes of our benighted men and some of our still more benighted women." (**Message to the world of Islam**, Karachi, 1977, pp. 58-61).

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According to **Women and Gender in Islam** (London, 1992, p. 101),"These findings obviously have relevance to the issues being debated in Muslim societies today, especially given the trend toward interpreting Muslim classical law yet more rigidly and toward endorsing, socially and governmentally, the orthodox Islamic discourse on gender and women. Now that women in unprecedented and ever-growing numbers are coming to form part of the intellectual community in Muslim countries – they are already reclaiming the right, not enjoyed for centuries, to attend mosque – perhaps those early struggles around the meaning of Islam will be explored in new ways and the process of the creation of Islamic law and the core discourse brought fully into question."

Confining women to the homes was a legal punishment for fornication provided four witnesses test testified to her guilt: "Those who commit fornication (*fahisha*) from your women, get four witnesses against them from among you. If they should testify, then confine them to homes until death claims them or God opens up a way for them" (4:15). Mind it that this is the only reason of confining the women to the homes, therefore, it can be argued that it would be illegal to apply such punishment against innocent women who intend to offer prayers in the mosques.

Nevin Reda remarks, "The situation of women in the mosque toward the end of the first quarter of the tenth century contrasts starkly with that of the "ideal" period. The descriptions of the mosques' layout and the Quran indicate women's complete access and participation. Perhaps the Quran's importance lies not only in the historical information it contains, but also in the authority that Muslims give it : As it is the word of God, it has precedence over any other source. Perhaps in

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it lies hope for the future of women in the mosque." (cf. **The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences**, 2:2, Nov., 2004, p. 95).

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NB: Ismailis, the followers of Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, the Imam of the Age are invited to contact the author by email (alymumtaz@yahoo.com) at any time for any information relating to the Ismaili history, beliefs and doctrines. Thanks.

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